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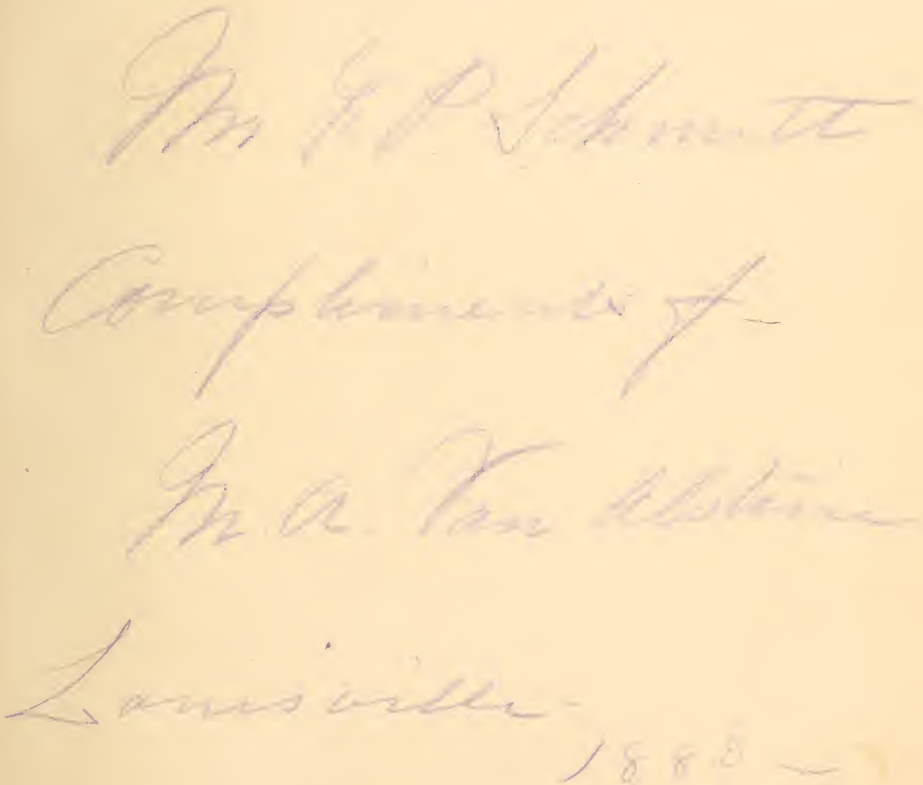

Your Friend
John H. Heywood

THE

UNITARIAN BANNER

AND

OTHER SERMONS.

By JOHN H. HEYWOOD,

MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF THE MESSIAH, LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

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TO

THE FRIENDS ON EARTH AND IN HEAVEN,

WHO,

DURING THE PAST THIRTY-EIGHT YEARS, BY PERSONAL KINDNESS AND
HEARTY CO-OPERATION IN RELIGIOUS AND HUMANE WORK,
HAVE ENDEARED LOUISVILLE TO ME, AND TO ALL
WHO FEEL WITH THE APOSTLE THAT,
OF FAITH, HOPE, CHARITY, THE
GREATEST IS CHARITY,

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

J. H. H.

PREFACE.

The question is often asked, "What do you and your Church believe?"

I have tried in this little book to answer the question plainly and definitely, and at the same time to indicate the general and characteristic thought of Unitarians in regard to the divine character and government, the spirit and work of our Saviour, and upon the great themes of life, duty, and immortality.

I have taken the liberty of inserting ten hymns, written by Unitarian and other liberal Christians. Some of them are as exquisite songs as the spirit of devotion ever inspired, so fragrant with the fine aroma of revering love that, like Mary's spikenard in the home at Bethany, "they have filled the house with the odor of the ointment."

Some of our orthodox friends, to whom Unitarianism is a lifeless religion, "Christianity with Christ left out," may be surprised to learn that sacred songs, which have found a place in most hymn-books and have sung themselves into myriads of hearts, came from the hearts of earnest and devout Unitarians.

J. H. H.

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THE UNITARIAN BANNER.

"In the name of our God we will set up our banners."—*Psalm* xx, 5.

A banner is a symbol. Hence its significance and value. Every country, every nationality has its banner, from the Roman Empire with its eagles that aspired to universal dominion to the smallest principality; from our continental nation with the great oceans for its bounds to the humblest European republic. The banner symbolizes what is dear to the patriot heart, and every patriot is prompted to cling to it. Every soldier stands by his colors. Every religious body has its banners. They may not be visible flags; they may be symbols of different kinds. The creeds were formerly called symbols. Every church has a creed or symbol of some kind. Some churches may not have authoritative statements of faith and opinion to which subscription is required as a condition of membership, but every church, every organization has its controlling thought, its characteristic faith, which in some form or other it expresses and makes its symbol or banner. Such banner every religious body ought to have, and it should set it up in the name of its God; that is, under deep conviction that its banner symbolizes and sets forth truths, principles, duties accordant with the will of God and helpful to man's highest interest and truest welfare, mental, moral, and spiritual. And to the banner thus set up it should be unfalteringly

true. It should stand by its colors. Better have no colors than to have them without the manliness or womanliness to stand by them. Neutrality where important principles are involved is pitiable; but better be neutral, better openly declare that you have no convictions than not to have courage to maintain the convictions you profess to have. If you have a faith, never be ashamed of it. In no presence, under no circumstances be ashamed of it. Be ashamed of not having a faith, or of not bravely defending the faith you have. "Truth, Freedom, Love"—be this the legend of the Unitarian banner, and to it let us ever be faithful.

We, as Unitarian Christians, or, if you prefer, as Christian Unitarians, have a faith which is very precious to us who were born and bred Unitarians, and, I think I may say with confidence, equally precious to you who, having been educated in other churches, have accepted it in mature years, after long examination, and not only have accepted, but have heartily embraced it. And the faith is substantially this:

I believe in God, in the one only God.—I do not believe in three Gods, or in three persons, three self-conscious beings, three intelligences united in one God; but I do believe in God, the one infinite, uncreated, all-informing MIND, the one ever-living, all-vivifying, comforting, sustaining, renewing SPIRIT.

> "Being above all beings! Mighty One,
> Whom none can comprehend, and none explore!
> Who fill'st existence with Thyself alone,
> Embracing all, supporting, ruling o'er—
> Being whom we call God, and know no more."

I believe in the Divine Sovereignty.—I do not believe in an arbitrary sovereign, who of his own will selects some of

the men and women created in the divine image for unending and everlasting happiness, and dooms other men and women created in that same image to unending and ever-increasing misery and anguish. I do believe in the sovereignty of the gracious, wise, just, holy, loving Father, who is intent on blessing every soul that he has called into existence; that heavenly Father whom Jesus teaches us to call our Father, and whose real children he charges us to prove ourselves to be by the exercise of a winning, forgiving, god-like spirit in those searching and animating words, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

I believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God.—I do not believe him to be the infinite and eternal God. I do believe in him as Peter presented him to the minds and hearts moved and thrilled by the glories and wonders of the pentecostal day: "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know;" whom, after his cruel crucifixion, God raised from the dead, that "all the house of Israel might know assuredly that God made the same Jesus, whom they crucified, both Lord and Christ." In this Jesus, thus made by the heavenly Father, his Father and our Father, Lord and Christ, in this divinely-appointed Leader, Teacher, Saviour, I do believe; and I not only believe in him, but I love him and revere him and fervently implore the aid of the divine Spirit that I may be faithful to him.

I believe in the Divine Spirit, the Holy Spirit.—I do not believe in the Spirit as a personality distinct from God any more than I believe in the spirit of man as a personality distinct from man. I do believe in the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the heavenly Father, and I believe that that Spirit is always seeking access to every human spirit to cleanse and renew it and bring it into close, loving, inseparable connection with itself for time and for eternity.

I believe in the atonement, in the reconciling, the making at one God and man. I do not believe in the atonement as a means of softening the heart of God and making it able and willing to forgive. That heart was never unable or unwilling to forgive, never unwilling to welcome to itself any of its penitent children. Never was the door of the hospitable home of any loving parent so ready to open to the returning son after sad wanderings as the heart of God to open itself to the lowly, repentant prodigal. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" So spake He, who penetrated far deeper than any or all others into the measureless depths of the divine heart, of the readiness of that heart always to cleanse and forgive and bless the hearts of its children. The heart of God never needed to be softened; but oh! how greatly man needs to have his heart changed and softened, in the old prophet's searching language; to have the stony heart, the heart hardened, almost petrified, by sins taken away, and the heart of flesh given to him. I believe in the atoning, the reconciling power of Jesus to touch and soften the hearts of men; of Jesus on the cross, when from amid the death agonies he breathed a prayer for the forgiveness of his murderers. I believe in his atoning power, not only when on the cross, but in every

moment, in every deed, in every influence of his pure, sinless, loving, winning life. He was and is and ever will be the great reconciler. His cross is the mighty magnet which has always drawn and always will draw the human heart to him, and through him to his Father and our Father: his cross rendered magnetic, not by material blood, but by the love which made him willing to shed every drop for the redemption and happiness of man.

I believe in Repentance.—I do not believe in any technical experience or merely transient emotion, but I do believe in real change of heart; that thorough change which may not be very demonstrative in wordy professions, but which turns a man from wrong thinking, wrong willing, wrong doing to right thinking, right willing, and right doing; such change as the earnest, sincere, genuine prophets insisted on as alone acceptable to God; which makes a man cease to do evil and learn to do well, to seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. And such repentance leads to righteousness, that personal rightness of being and rightness of doing which Jesus would have characterize every friend and follower of his; which is owned and blessed of God; and which ennobles and blesses man in making him truthful, honest, upright, straightforward, and in enabling him to confide in his brother man; and which unites, strengthens, adorns society by genuine morality, not superficial and soulless, but deep and vital; the morality which rests on principle, on which Jesus pronounces his benediction; the morality of the Sermon on the Mount; that heart morality and life morality which is applicable in all ages and all worlds, and can never be outgrown.

I believe in Retribution.—I do not believe in hopeless, vindictive punishment, leading only to despair, but I do

believe in just and righteous chastening proportioned to character, opportunity, desert, such chastening as the heavenly Father in His unerring wisdom, fairness, and justice sees best for his weak, erring children; children whom, notwithstanding their errors and sins, He still loves, and whose hearts he yearns with infinite yearning to win to himself, to truth, goodness, happiness, and heaven.

Shall it be that the human heart, as it becomes more and more filled with the spirit of Christ and of God, grows tenderer, more merciful, and more intent on rescuing the imperiled and saving the lost, and that the great father-heart of God can ever be shut against any of his children, or can ever forget them? Shall we to whom Jesus has unvailed the face of our Father, and in all its benignity, have less inspiring views of the divine providence and graciousness than the prophet when, with heart pervaded with reverence and love, he said, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Never, never will God forget, and never will he cease to be as gracious and loving as he is just. The eternal ages of immortality will but cause His infinite holiness and deathless love to reveal themselves more and more.

I believe in Immortality.—I do not believe in a vague, shadowy, unreal state of being, a world of ghosts and melancholy shades; but I do believe in a world of reality, a world of light, of truth, of life, made bright and beautiful by the full outshining of light from Him who is light and in whom is no darkness at all.

I believe in the Church of Christ and God as the divinely-ordained means and instrument of helping men in faithful living here and in real preparation for the life of immortality. I do not believe in the church as an ecclesiastical

corporation, or as an instrument of ambition and power. I do believe in it as the association of all honest, Christ-loving, God-serving souls, of all truth-seeking minds, as a real fellowship, a union of warm and sympathetic hearts filled with love for God and love for man, and intent on making the world better, brighter, and happier.

And I believe in the Religion which this broad church, broad as the love of Christ, seeks to promote and make universally prevalent. In merely professional religion, the religion which only says, however loudly, "Lord, Lord," I do not believe, but most thoroughly do I believe in the religion which rests upon the two great commandments, which is so real and so beneficent that when the ear hears it, it blesses it, when the eye sees it, it gives witness unto it, which delivers the poor and the fatherless and him that has none to help, which puts on righteousness for its clothing and justice for its diadem—that religion which sees with the eye of faith and aspires in the spirit of hope and lives the life of charity. Such in substance is our faith.

Does the summary presented seem a fair statement of your faith as a Unitarian Christian, with God for your Father and Jesus as your Teacher, Leader, Saviour? Can you take a banner with God's "crown-name," FATHER, inscribed on it in letters of light as your banner? Then set it up in the name of the Lord. Stand up for it. Do not act as if ashamed of it. Your faith may have reason to be ashamed of you for your faint-heartedness and timidity in asserting and maintaining it, but you have no occasion to be ashamed of it. It is a noble, rational, glorious faith; stand up for it. Don't give way for a moment to the assumptions or the superciliousness of its opponents and decriers, whether they be fair women or bigoted men. Don't meet bigotry with bigotry—that would not be

Christ-like; equally unchristlike would it be to succumb to bigotry through fear or mistaken and mistaking courtesy.

In the name of God set up your banner and seek the blessing of the Spirit of God, that you may defend it in manner and courage becoming a child of the heavenly Father and a reverent follower of Him who said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

THE BOND OF LOVE.

"Beneath the shadow of the cross,
As earthly hopes remove,
His new commandment Jesus gives,
His blessed word of love.

"Oh, bond of union, strong and deep!
Oh, bond of perfect peace!
Not e'en the lifted cross can harm
If we but hold to this.

"Then, Jesus, be thy spirit ours,
And swift our feet shall move
To deeds of pure self-sacrifice
And the sweet tasks of love."

SAMUEL LONGFELLOW.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION AND OF SCIENCE IN HUMAN NATURE.

"Now Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—*Hebrews* xi, 1.

Many persons, in the general mental awakening which characterizes the present age, seem to think that by and by, perhaps ere long, science will take the place of religion. Their thought appears to be that religion belongs to ages of ignorance, when the laws and powers of nature are very imperfectly understood, and that with the completer unfolding and better understanding of those powers and laws, men will seek in them alone inspiration and guidance. Science, they say, is a matter of understanding, religion of faith; the one has a solid, the other a fanciful basis; the one must therefore endure, the other must ultimately pass away.

This view I believe to be as one-sided and erroneous as the extreme opposite view, held by many religionists, that science is essentially atheistic, and hence a delusion and a snare. Too many, on the one side and on the other, have grossly erred in representing religion and science as antagonistic to each other. It is a mournful fact that many theologians, Roman Catholic and Protestant, have fought

wildly, blindly, irrationally against science, have placed every conceivable barrier that prejudice could erect to obstruct its progress. The beautiful, luminous science of astronomy was thus fought against in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—Sisera fighting against the stars—its most gifted expounders imprisoned, the works in which its principles were most clearly elucidated put on the list of forbidden books. Geology has had similar opposition to encounter, similar barriers erected against it. It has been denounced as infidel on the same ground as astronomy—assumed antagonism to the teachings of Scripture. And the same jealousy and unworthy apprehension of science are found among many theologians yet. And the counterpart of this jealousy and misapprehension we find among not a few scientists, who, because many theologians have been narrow-minded and exclusive, and because many superstitions have been connected with religion, and faith has often been placed in opposition to reason, and foolish barriers put in the way of truth on her resistless course, have pronounced religion a worn-out thing, well enough in dark ages, but utterly unable to bear the light of day and to meet the wants of advancing society.

All wrong, as I believe, on both sides are these misapprehensions and jealousies. Utterly unjust to science and religion, no less than to human nature, is the position that man needs not or can outgrow either the one or the other. Both are essential and both rest on firm foundations. Each has its own place to fill, its own domain to rule; neither can fill the place nor rule the domain of the other; and both places must be filled, both domains ruled, and ruled well, if the great needs of human nature are to be met, its mighty hunger satisfied. For this nature hungers for truth and it hungers for God. It cries out for truth, the hea-

venly manna, and it cries out for the life of its life, even the living God.

Science and religion both rest on firm foundations, the foundation and justification of the one being in the intellectual, of the other in the spiritual powers, and the spiritual and intellectual powers combine with the physical to make up and round out human nature in full symmetry, development, and beauty. Let us carefully consider this point—of the equally firm and sure foundations of each—of science and of religion.

The former belongs to the domain of the intellect, and the organ of the intellect is the understanding—the power which analyzes, searches, compares, and combines; which seeks out facts and endeavors to ascertain the law that explains and harmonizes them. No one can doubt the reality or solidity of this foundation of science. Though we may not be students or proficients in science ourselves, yet we desire to know, so far as possible, the facts, the realities in the universe and the laws by which those facts are reconciled and explained, and we rejoice that there are men who have time, means, talents, taste, and genius to discover those facts and discern those laws. Such men we regard not only as mental benefactors, but as representatives of the human intellect in its deepest cravings and in its highest aspirations. We may personally know little of astronomy, geology, paleontology, physiology, or the higher mathematics, yet none the less do we admire those great sciences, seeing in them the facts which keen and laborious searchers have ascertained, and the deep underlying laws which patient thinkers have read; and for the men who have discovered the facts and read the laws—Galileo, Copernicus, Kepler, Newton, Laplace, Lyell, Owen, Agassiz, Tyndall, Huxley, Darwin, we have profound re-

spect and warm gratitude. Science, true science, commands our reverence, not only because of our assurance that all science, however impracticable and visionary it may seem at first, yet ultimately will conduce to real, practical good, as Agassiz so well indicated when he bade his hearers remember that the power of electricity, now so intimately connected not only with deeply-interesting thought, but with the daily business of life—carrying the messages of commerce and affection across continents and under the deep sea—when first discovered was used to move puppets for the amusement of children. Not only for this confidence of ultimate good to result from it does science command our reverence, but because of its own majesty and because it discloses more and more of that all-uniting, all-reconciling truth which makes the universe a fair and well-ordered cosmos, and which the mind of man more and more craves to know. Science has foundation firm, solid, permanent in the intellectual nature. This none will deny.

The foundation of religion in the spiritual nature is equally solid and permanent. As the intellect seeks to learn the facts and to read the laws of the universe, so the soul, with its sense of the infinite, with its aspiration for the heavenly and the divine, with its yearning for the enduring, the immortal, longs for, seeks to find the infinite, the all-informing Mind, the supreme Wisdom, of which it feels that those wondrous, all-harmonizing laws are the expression, the sublime thought. Consciousness and the history of the race attest this yearning, this tendency. In reality the two-fold testimony is stronger in the latter instance than in the former, because if we take the race through and from the beginning, more, many more have had definite consciousness of the power and influence of

their spiritual yearnings than of their intellectual aspirings. One may assert indeed that this testimony is weakened by the fact of the ignorance, the unintellectuality of the masses of men. If so, then let him be reminded that in all the great thinkers who have led humanity's van—Plato, Socrates, Zoroaster—there has been the same strong attestation to the aspiration of the spiritual nature to the infinite and the divine. Of this nature faith is the organ. It is to the spiritual nature what the understanding is to the intellectual, a veritable, substantial power, a real, distinctive attribute, a far-reaching, penetrating, grand capacity.

But, says one, admitting the reality of this power, it has so often been connected with illusions and delusions, with superstitions and dreams, that it can not be confided in. Indeed? Shall we say then for the same reason the understanding can not be confided in? Has it not been connected, too, with great, countless illusions and delusions? What was the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, that most elaborate construction by the understanding of the scheme of the universe, but a mighty error, a stupendous delusion? And does not the history of the understanding in its searchings, its analyses, and its combinings in all departments of science, abound in illusions? Shall we therefore set the understanding aside as altogether illusory and unreliable? Not unless we are prepared to abandon ourselves to utter pyrrhonism, to discrown and disown our intellectual nature. If the objection then be set aside as of no weight when applied to the understanding, let it with equal decisiveness be set aside as inapplicable to the great organ of the spiritual nature, faith.

"But the understanding has to do with visible things, with things tangible, or that reveal themselves to some of the senses, while faith concerns itself with invisible things,

and therefore the one can be relied on and the other not." Will that statement bear examination? The understanding has, indeed, to do with visible and tangible things, but it has other things and all-important things to deal with. Why does it concern itself with things visible and tangible? Surely, to find out the laws which govern them; and did mortal eye ever see, did mortal finger ever touch one of those laws? Altogether invisible and intangible are they, and yet the discerning of them is the crowning glory of the understanding, and the writing of them in legible letters so that even the wayfaring man may read, is the grand achievement of science. The understanding has to do with invisible things, and so has faith, and poor and dull-eyed would both be if they had not to do with them. Invisible things! Whoever saw or handled the love which makes heroines of mothers guarding their dear children in face of direst peril, or the patriotism which leads the young and the noble to surrender life for country, or the power of conscience which makes one strong against bribes and all the allurements of evil, and calm amid the agonies of a cruel death? The glory and the gleam would speedily fade from human life and nobleness vanish from human character, were man to cease to feel the charm and the power of invisible realities.

Setting these objections, then, aside as invalid, let us consider faith as the organ of the soul. A grand capacity, a real, substantial power it is. The sacred writer presents it in its reality and majesty when he says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." *Substance;* that means the foundation on which they stand, to us the ground of trust in their existence. The *evidence*, the proof of things not seen. The significance and strength of that expression, Mr. Mountford vividly

illustrates when he says, "Faith, like the magnetic needle in a starless night, is the evidence of things not seen." That needle, in its steady pointing, attests the existence of the magnetic pole. It is as if it said audibly, "That pole *is* and *there* it is." It is an invisible thing that it attests, but no seaman, however immersed in practicalities, however incredulous of spiritual realities, but believes in the invisible reality revealed by the mystic finger, and surrenders himself to the wonderful guidance. Clouds may shut out the sun, midnight gloom may hide the stars, tempests may lash the sea into rage, but so long as he has the tremulous but faithfully-pointing index to look to, he sails on without fear. Faith thus steadily points to a spiritual world and to God. In its steady pointing it is the evidence, the attestation, the proof of things not seen. It is as if it said in tones distinct and clear of the spiritual world, "It *is* and *there* it is;" and man, sailing over life's oft-tempestuous sea, has confided in the testimony and yielded himself up to the providential guidance. Sometimes the magnetic needle is deflected for a time from its steady pointing by the near presence of counter-attractions, but it earnestly strives to release itself from the disturbing influence and to resume its congenial duty of pointing unintermittingly to the pole. Sometimes faith is exposed to influences which would break its connection with the spiritual world, turn its heaven-pointing finger aside, but like the magnetic needle it seeks all the while to release itself from the unhappy thralldom and to turn its majestic finger skyward. It would be, it *must* be the evidence of things not seen. That is its high prerogative, its sublime office.

The understanding leads the intellectual nature to science; faith leads the spiritual nature to religion. Both natures belong to man; let either be disowned or dishon-

ored, and so far he ceases to be man, so far he mars the divine image, destroys the divine likeness. Let both be reverenced, be permitted and invited to do to the utmost their special work; let the understanding enrich and expand the intellectual nature by the grandeurs and with the inestimable resources of science; let the spiritual nature be enlarged, uplifted, and vivified by the inspirations and attractions of the spiritual world revealed by faith, and be cleansed and renewed by the Divine Spirit and grace; and let the two-fold nature thus unfolded and developed be connected with a healthful physical organization, then we have perfect manhood; the divine image brought out distinct and clear, the divine likeness restored, and man—whom the old philosophers called the microcosm—brought into harmony with the macrocosm, the universe. Then science and religion minister richly and freely each to the other, clearing the atmosphere and making the vision keen. Science, in showing the regularity, uniformity, and wide sweep of the laws by which the Creator governs the universe, saves religion from narrowness, one-sidedness, capriciousness, and superstition; and religion, in revealing the nearness, the indwelling presence, the immediate and constant action of God, saves science from bondage to unintelligent law, and makes the universe all luminous and warm with divine light and love. Nay, more; religion unfolds and makes real to science the truth presented in those words of Jesus, "*all live to God*," the truth which in its wide sweep embraces all worlds, and all being, and which has such preciousness and power of consolation for the heart with its manifold experiences of light and darkness, of blight and bloom — the truth, from before whose radiance death vanishes and life reigns. Science in itself has no word of comfort for the heart, no assurance

of immortality. It leads us to the grave, but it has no hand to help us beyond it. The supporting hand, the cheering assurance, the thrilling word—for them we must look to religion, and, thank God, we look not in vain. The Father of spirits discloses himself to our spirits, and with that revealing of himself reveals the world of immortality. And to make the unfolding fuller, the revealing more definite and quickening, He has given us one whose eye was undimmed by sin, whose whole being was in perfect accord with the divine will, and in whom, therefore, faith did its perfect work in removing the dark barriers, the narrow limitations that shut mind and soul in, and enabling him to see the King in his beauty and the immortal world in its nearness and radiance. In Jesus we see faith in its perfectness of power. Looking upon him, with the eye of the soul seeing him, feeling the gentle pressure of his hand, listening to his thought-laden, deeply-penetrating words, we begin to apprehend more distinctly and to appreciate more thoroughly that grand, weighty declaration of our text—as profound in philosophy as it is inspiring in religion, "Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

NEARER, MY GOD, TO THEE.

"Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee;
E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be—
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee.

"Though like the wanderer, the sun gone down,
Darkness comes over me, my rest a stone,
Yet in my dreams I'd be
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee.

"There let the way appear steps unto heaven;
All that thou sendest me in mercy given;
Angels to beckon me
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee.

"Then, with my waking thoughts bright with thy praise,
Out of my stony griefs Bethel I'll raise;
So by my woes to be
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee.

"Or if on joyful wing cleaving the sky,
Sun, moon, and stars forgot, upward I fly,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God, to thee, nearer to thee."

SARAH F. ADAMS.

DIFFERENTIATION OF CHRISTIANITY:

Or, the Christ-Religion in its Essence.

"By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."—1 *Cor.* xii, 13.

Many of the most earnest men and women in all parts of Christendom are getting to be utterly weary of sectarianism, and wish it were well out of the way. And when one thinks how narrow and bitter the sectarian spirit has been, how it has shut up sympathy within narrowest bounds, how it has set Christians at variance, and wasted in petty, party strifes resources that ought to have been used for redeeming and ennobling humanity, sectarianism does seem altogether wretched and hateful, fit only to be cast into the limbo, or fool's paradise, to which all vanity and nonsense belong.

But to one calmly reflecting upon the development and progress of Christianity, upon the unfolding of religious thought, and its application to life and society, denominationalism, which is sometimes confounded with sectarianism, though unjustly—for the one is, as its etymology shows, essentially divisive and exclusive, which the other is not, either essentially or necessarily — denominationalism does not seem altogether a vile and bad thing, or to have been without its use in civilizing and evangelizing the world. Nay, it evidently has had a place to fill, a work to do in

the providential education of the race. If you can find any part of Christendom, large or small, nation or community, in which, because of one all-dominating ecclesiasticism, no denominationalism has been permitted to be or to appear, be sure that you will find that community or nation not the most active and advanced in intellectual life, not the most abounding in spiritual vitality, in moral energy, and well-directed beneficence, but the opposite. Witness Spain, Portugal, Mexico; witness the Roman States, where, notwithstanding the varied learning and great culture of the members of the papal court and all the appliances of the most wonderful ecclesiastical organization that the world has ever known, religion has lost its hold upon nearly all the educated men, has become with many among the uneducated masses a gross superstition, where popular instruction has been at low ebb, and philanthropic institutions, insane asylums, and kindred establishments have felt and manifested least of the humanizing influence characteristic of the age. And this testimony becomes all the stronger and more conclusive when we see that the Roman Catholic Church does far more for the instruction of its masses, makes its philanthropic institutions nobler, humaner, in Protestant countries, in communities all alive with denominational spirit and activity than in the states which have been through the ages right under the eye and penetrated all through with the influences of the papacy. For example, Roman Catholicism in the United States is purer, more spiritual, freer from superstition, more intent on the instruction of the masses, and has its benevolent institutions in far better condition than in Italy, where for centuries its sway was unlimited.

Denominationalism has evidently had, and still has, an important part to play as an educational factor, an agent of

mental and spiritual development. What is that part? How is it played? We meet quite often in metaphysical and scientific works with the term "differentiation," and when we look to our dictionaries for a definition we see that the word in logic designates "the act of distinguishing or describing a thing by giving its *differentia* or specific difference;" and that in physiology "it designates the production of a diversity of parts by a process of evolution or development, as when the seed develops the root and the stem, the initial stem develops the leaf, branches, flower-buds, etc." Taking either of these definitions, we find that denominationalism has had its part to perform in the differentiation of Christianity. If we take the logical definition, denominationalism has helped, consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, in distinguishing and describing Christianity by giving its *differentia*, showing what its specific, essential quality is. Sometimes it has shown it purposely and positively by direct statement of what that essence is; sometimes negatively by aiding people to see very plainly that the essence of Christianity is something very different from the quality emphasized by one or another form of sectarianism. By the physiological definition it has served as a differentiator of Christianity, in evolving or developing the powers and qualities inherent in Christianity, as leaf, branches, and flower-buds are developed from the initial stem.

What is that initial stem? What is the essential Christianity that is to be differentiated? Not a dogma, not a form, not an ordinance, not an institution. It is something, if you will, inclusive of them all, but in thought and essence it is distinct from them and superior to them. It is a power, a force—a mighty mental and moral force—a power of spirit and of life. How magnificent, how uplifting, that

outflow of the soul of our Saviour, "I am come that they might have LIFE, and have it more abundantly," not stintedly, but aboundingly, in exceeding abundance. Christianity, in its essence, is that power of life, that living and life-giving power which came and which comes, which never stops coming into the world with and through Christ. Theology speaks of him as the incarnation of God, and in the profoundest, most philosophic sense I believe he was such incarnation, according to that memorable declaration of his to his earnestly-inquiring disciple, "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." The indwelling presence in Christ of that infinite, eternal Being whom our minds call God, whom our hearts call Father, if you term that incarnation, I accept it, I believe in it thoroughly. It meets the heart's yearning, it accords with the mind's deepest thinking upon the relation between God and man. In every true soul God is in some measure incarnate; to every soul He comes, in every soul He dwells according to its openness and its receptivity. In the language of St. John, "As many as receive him, to them gives he power to become the sons of God." The soul of Jesus was wide open, every window, every door; there was no sin, no selfishness to close any entrance, to lessen in any degree its receptivity, and the divine presence flowed in as flows the ocean into the inlets, filling, penetrating, pervading, thus making that rich, holy, beautiful nature, that consecrated Being, full of God.

From the soul of Jesus thus infilled with divinity, thus permeated with the Father's presence, flowed forth that spiritual force, that living and life-giving power which we call Christianity. That is what it was, what in essence it is—a vital power, a spiritual force; not an institution, not an organization, but that mighty power of spirit and of life,

which was to reveal itself not only amid the glorious wonders and thrilling inspirations of the pentecostal day, and at the uttering of apostolic voices and the laying on of apostolic hands, but through the ages the world over, and wherever earnest, sincere, fervent men and women, lovers of God and of God's children, should work in the spirit of Jesus for the redemption, uplifting, ennobling of humanity.

In good time, in God's time, which is always good, was that vital and vitalizing power sent into the world. And for what end? Not to be petrified, not fossilized. It was to enter HEARTS, to make them pure, tender, loving, to change them from stone to flesh, to fill them with sweet and undying sympathy, with charity and compassion, to charge them to the full, and make them electric with the spirit of friendship, genuine friendship, after the order of Christ's. It was to enter MINDS, to make them radiant with glorious and divine truths of the fatherhood of God, of the redeeming work of Christ, of the cleansing, renewing, sanctifying influence of the divine Spirit, of human brotherhood, and of an inspiring immortality. It was to enter SOULS, and give them a living sense of God, an experimental knowledge of religion; to bind them inseparably to the dear Father in heaven in a love and trust which give the freedom of the universe, opening the spiritual eye and making immortality as near as it is real. It was to enter CHARACTER as a transforming presence, molding it into heavenly symmetry and beauty. It was to enter SOCIETY, to purify, enlighten, soften, elevate it; to exorcise from it the demons of selfishness, avarice, lust, and bring in all winning, saving, angel presences. To enter INSTITUTIONS, to make them just, humane, merciful; to render them honorable to God in making them helpful to man according to

our Saviour's searching, probing utterance, when to cold, hard, unbrotherly formalism, he said, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath"—ever-memorable declaration of deepest meaning and widest range, taking within its grasp all institutions, churches, organizations, and teaching that they are all made for man, and not man for them. In a word, this divine power, this mighty spiritual force was to enter the WORLD, and to pervade it in all its relations, associations, agencies, until its kingdoms—all its kingdoms, mental, moral, spiritual—should become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, in accordance with and in fulfillment of that wonderful declaration of Jesus, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth."

This was and is Christianity, as I understand it, in its *differentia*, its specific attribute, its essential quality. A power, a force; that power, that force, one; but one not in any narrowness of thought or in any petty limit of measure; one rather as God is one—his unity, his oneness comprehending measureless, infinite diversity; or, if you will, one as solar light is one, but which the prism may resolve into the seven colors, and whose rays, as science teaches us, are not luminous rays only, but heating rays and rays of wondrous chemical power also.

This mighty force of Christianity was, is, ever will be ONE; but from its first manifestation men have constantly been analyzing it, seeking to have its light pass through some resolving prism; and it has appeared therefore to them in one or more of its constituent colors rather than in its beautiful, all-comprehending oneness.

The power of Christianity in the hearts, over the lives of St. Paul, St. James, and St. John was the same in its

transforming, renewing influence, but how different their intellectual conceptions of it! Read their respective epistles carefully, and you can not fail to be struck with their different representations of Christianity, not discordant or antagonistic, but different according as they saw one or another of the rays into which the pure light was resolved, or as they discerned and felt the luminous or the heating or the chemical rays.

As it was in the beginning, the apostolic age, so has it been ever since. One man or one set of men, or one church or denomination has seen and made prominent this ray, while another has seen that ray and made it prominent. All the while the prism has been applied and the analyzing, resolving process has gone on. That is right and well, and so far as denominationalism uses its prism for that end it does inestimable good. Harm is done when sectarianism, usurping denominationalism's place, insists that the one colored ray on which it fastens its eye is Christianity's glorious light; when the Methodist sees only the red ray, and the Baptist the orange, and the Congregationalist the yellow, and the Episcopalian the green, and the Presbyterian the blue, and the Roman Catholic the indigo, and the Unitarian or Universalist the violet, and each vehemently asserts, and denounces the others if they do not agree to the assertion, that the single ray which he sees is the full solar beam. It is well to analyze and distinguish the several rays in Christianity's full, resplendent beam; but this analyzing must be done to make the final synthesis complete, to aid in recombining those rays that our thinking, our acting, our living may be in its clear, white light, and we thus receive its full blessing.

It is well that there are different churches and denominations, and that they should feel that there are diversities

of gifts, and should make the most of the gifts with which they are favored, but let them always remember that others have their gifts, and that it is the same Spirit from whom all true, effective gifts do come. Knowing that there are differences of administration, let churches, denominations, adopt the forms of government which seem most in accord with the spirit and the word of Christ and best adapted to the building up of the great kingdom of truth and righteousness, of beneficence and humanity; but let them be sure to remember always that there is one and the same Lord to them and to those who have other forms of administration. Knowing that there are diversities of operations—manifold ways of effective working—let individual Christians, churches, associations work in the ways, according to the methods which seem best fitted for accomplishing the great ends of beneficence; but let them never forget that others may feel impelled to work in different ways and by different methods, and that it is the same God which worketh all in all. But in whatever part of the vineyard we are placed let us *work*, not feeling that our part is the whole vineyard, but never forgetting that it is a part of the great vineyard.

And may the good Spirit enable us all so to work, with such singleness of mind, such breadth of purpose, such fervency of soul, and so lovingly and generously that we may have day by day a deepening sense of the divine Fatherhood, a more vivid realization of human brotherhood, and be bound by closer and stronger heart-ties to that winning, inspiring Guide, Redeemer, Friend, who came on earth to accomplish friendship's noblest, highest, grandest office and work in leading us to God, in helping us to know Him and serve Him and enjoy Him and be blessed by His deep and abiding peace—office and work so sweetly,

so touchingly indicated in the petition, which came from his heart's depths, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." That is the grand synthesis to which our analyses, if we are true in making them, will lead us. That is the union of all the parts in one organic, effective whole, a union so complete and so vital that if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored, all rejoice with it"—the realization and fulfillment of the apostle's vision and prophetic hope that by one Spirit we may all be baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free.

"In one fraternal bond of love,
One fellowship of mind,
The saints below and saints above
Their bliss and glory find."

WATCHMAN, TELL US OF THE NIGHT.

"Watchman, tell us of the night—
What its signs of promise are?
Traveller, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory-beaming star!
Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of hope or joy foretell?
Traveller, yes; it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.

"Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveller, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveller, ages are its own;
See, it bursts o'er all the earth.

"Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveller, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease:
Hie thee to thy quiet home.
Traveller, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come."

SIR JOHN BOWRING.

THE FAITH OF A UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."—*Mark* ix, 24.

You ask, what do Unitarian Christians believe? Let me endeavor to give, this evening, as full and clear an answer to your question as the limits of a single discourse will permit. The words selected for my text seem to me especially appropriate, because, in disclosing the true attitude and great need of the human soul, they indicate the kind of service which an earnest and living church will aim to render to man, and such service we think the Unitarian, the liberal Christian, Church is pre-eminently fitted to render.

They indicate the soul's true attitude and its great need. "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." From the depths of a warm, tender heart, yearning for the deliverance of the poor, suffering boy from his terrible affliction, came this touching, thrilling cry. The agitated, agonized father did believe, and with a belief that quivered and throbbed, so real, so intense was it, so filled with his heart's life-blood. He knew he believed, and not for worlds would he have parted with his belief. But such was his humility, his self-distrust, that he would not claim for his faith that it was perfect, lacking nothing. It might want

some important element, and, if so, he longed to have the want supplied. "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." This was his cry. It is the cry, the entreaty of the human soul.

Man is made for belief, for faith. It is his nature's great necessity to believe. Circumstances, external influences, peculiarities of temperament may cause individuals to be doubters at times, may make some doubters always; but doubt is not man's normal, healthful, happy condition. It may be the inevitable state for a season of some earnest minds in their developings and struggles and upward progress, and the honest doubter may be more reverent, really more religious than many a holder of a traditional faith, but in itself and as a permanency no one could desire it. Man does not say, "Lord, I believe; help me to disbelieve." His yearning is for belief, for a positive, cheering, strengthening faith. For that the human spirit is formed, and to that it instinctively tends. The little child has faith. Its first religion is all faith; sweet, unquestioning faith in its father and mother, who are to it the visible divine providence, the manifested tenderness of God, the earliest mediators and connecting ties between its soul and the heavenly Father; and man must have faith if he would be in harmony with himself and with the universe. His cry, the fervent cry of our common humanity, is, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." As an able thinker of the Roman Catholic Church, the late Dr. Cummings, says, "Faith is the health of the spiritual man," and man does not attain to perfect health of mind, heart, and soul until with childlike trust he believes, confides, in God. That is the true position of the human soul.

And here we see the service which a church should

seek to render to man, namely, to help him in believing, to aid him in attaining a gladdening, inspiring faith, a faith that shall satisfy the mind and meet the mighty hunger of the heart. This life-journey of ours is a momentous one, this life-conflict is often terrific. We have to do with stern realities, with passions, temptations, sins, with joys that thrill and with sorrows that rend, and the church that would help us must come to us with realities, with substantial verities, with power to make us calm, true, and strong.

Does the Unitarian Church come with such power? Can it render this service to man? I believe it can, and does.

I do not, of course, assert or imply that other churches can not render it also. Heaven forbid such narrowness and injustice. Myriads of minds are there which they help in the upward course. Let them help all they can, and the Father's blessing attend them.

But there are persons whom they fail to reach, whose doubts they do not remove, whose faith they do not quicken, and among these are many to whom the Unitarian Church can render most important aid. Regarding, as I do, the Unitarian view of Christianity, of pure, undefiled religion, as the nearest approximation to the truth as it is in Jesus, and the fairest, fullest interpretation of it, I believe, necessarily, that it is fitted to help all minds, and that ultimately its beneficent influence will be universally felt and acknowledged. But there are many whom it may reach at once and directly, to whom it will come as comes the beautiful dawn, filling the heaven with light and glory, filling the heart with hope and gladness, making the path of duty clear and luminous, giving new interest to life and throwing an auroral radiance over the grave. May the spirit of truth and love guide me as I attempt to unfold

the faith so precious to them and us, and, as we think, so freighted with blessings for all.

THE DIVINE UNITY.

We believe in God, the one, the only God. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." To us there is but one God.

In making this positive affirmation of our belief in the unity of God, we would not assert nor imply that other Christians, Christians of Trinitarian views, do not believe in the divine unity; we would not impute to them belief in three Gods instead of one God. The language used in some of their formulas, at first view, would seem clearly to present the idea of tritheism, as in the Athanasian Creed, "There is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal." Some expounders of these formulas, moreover, have used illustrations, nay, have made positive statements which seem to mean tritheism or to mean nothing; but as such unguarded and extreme statements are disclaimed by careful thinkers, and as the authoritative standards emphatically declare, whatever may be their expressions about tri-personality, and however perplexing such expressions may be to plain men and women, unaccustomed to scholastic subtleties, that they mean to teach the essential unity of the Supreme Being, we would attribute no other thought or purpose to them. Far be it from us to do our fellow-Christians the wrong of imputing to them what they positively disclaim.

But from all such "tri-personal" statements we shrink

as confused, confusing, and unscriptural. The Litany in the Book of Common Prayer is a wonderful composition. In depth, pathos, and comprehensiveness, it commends itself to the general heart; but in what utter contrast to the Lord's Prayer are some of its invocations! The word of Jesus is, "When ye pray, say, Our Father," not, "O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity." He presents to us always and only the ONE, as the object of supreme adoration, and Him he would have us address in the language of the heart, not in the terms of scholastic philosophy.

Of course we are not to attempt to limit or fathom the illimitable and unfathomable recesses and depths of the divine nature, or by any sharp definitions circumscribe the divine personality. But the divine unity we must reverence and keep unimpaired, clinging to it as clung patriarchs and prophets, who saw it written by the hand of God in letters of light upon the starry heavens, and inscribed by the same hand upon the human soul. We believe, then, in the one God, in whom we live and move and have our being, the all-comprehending, all-pervading, all-sustaining One. We hold fast with unrelaxing grasp to the sublime monotheism of Moses and of Christ. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."

Such is our belief in the one God. If it be incomplete, or defective, may He, by his gracious Spirit, amend and fill it out. We want to believe aright, to have our belief so just to the infinite One, and so deep and firm, that it shall anchor our souls immovably to Him.

THE DIVINE FATHERHOOD.

We believe in the Fatherhood of God. "When ye pray, say, Our Father." Father! dear and sacred name!

Would that we could once hear it uttered as Jesus uttered it; then should we in some measure apprehend its significance, its comprehensiveness, and infinite tenderness. No coldly-theological term was it to him, expressive of some metaphysical distinction in the Deity, but his heart's name of the all-loving One.

We believe that God is the Father every where and always, feeling for every soul a Father's yearning; following it every moment through all the vicissitudes of its existence in time and in eternity, with a Father's kindly care; giving or withholding, chastening or rewarding, as he sees best, but ordering all discipline with an eye keen with a Father's solicitude, soft with a Father's tenderness, and evermore intent upon the real good, the holiness and happiness of his child.

We believe that God is our Father, the Father of all, and the belief is infinitely precious. If it be not as deep, living, comprehensive as it should be — and what mortal faith has ever approximated to the divine reality, which, once discerned, would illumine life with celestial light, and give peace, joy ineffable — may He deepen, broaden, animate it, that it may fill our hearts and transform our whole being.

THE CHARACTER AND MISSION OF JESUS.

We believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, man's heaven-appointed Teacher, Friend, Redeemer. The depths of his nature we presume not to fathom; no plummet has ever sounded them, and the wiser, the better the world becomes, the deeper that nature is found to be. The mystery of its connection with the Father we attempt not to solve. The relation of any soul to the Infinite is a profound and

solemn mystery, which revering faith may apprehend, but no understanding can fully comprehend. If so deep and awe-inspiring the mystery of the union of the humblest soul with God, how much more, infinitely more, of the grandest, holiest, tenderest, and gentlest soul that ever inhabited and glorified mortal frame.

Jesus comes to us in the Scriptures and in his life as a man, as one touched with the sense of our infirmities, tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin; as *the* man, the man Christ Jesus, but such a man as no other in the peerlessness of his character, in the grandeur, the wide reach, the deathless influence of his appointed work. His humanity is evident, but that humanity is all radiant with divinity. No Arian theory satisfies our thoughts of Jesus or answers our earnest questionings in regard to his wonderful being. The indwelling presence in Jesus is not of angel or super-angel, but of Him who is the life of all life, earthly, angelic, seraphic. When, in our yearnings and gropings, our achings of heart, our griefs, our joys, our hopes and aspirations, we take the proffered hand of Jesus, to be led by him, it is to be led, not to cherub or archangel, but to the Father of our spirits, of all spirits, his Father and our Father, his God and our God. And he leads us to the Father because it is the Father's Spirit which fills, illumines, glorifies, and perfects his being, rendering it divinely beautiful and giving to him a power of love and holiness that makes him Mediator, Reconciler, Redeemer.

And how does he effect his redeeming work? Not through any appeasing of divine wrath by bloody sacrifice —the Father has no wrath requiring to be thus appeased; not through any softening of the divine heart, making it willing to forgive—that heart was always full to overflowing with pardoning love, ready to pour in its gracious,

healing, reviving waters wherever hearts were open to receive them; but through his melting, cleansing, winning power over the heart of man, opening that heart to the divine grace and awakening its yearning for the Father's blessing. From every word of the Saviour's lips, from every deed of his life, exhaled the pure, sweet aroma of reconciling love; and sure are we, that, whenever he is seen as he was and is, in his own beautiful personality, all hearts will be won to him as to humanity's best friend and the soul's true leader, through duty's ways, to home and God.

This is our faith in Jesus, and dear is it as a mother's love, and fair as the immortal hope that cheers the dying bed and beckons the soul on to blessedness. If it fail in any way to apprehend the radiant beauty of his character or the significance of his mission, may God correct, expand, and vitalize it.

THE PRESENCE AND POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We believe in the Holy Spirit. Of its personality, as distinct from the Father's, we know nothing, and the volume of inspiration, as we understand it, affirms nothing; but in its reality as the divine Spirit, as our Father's Spirit, and in its readiness to visit and illumine every soul of man, we most fully believe, and with fervent gratitude for the privilege of believing. Its pure, calm light can never be extinguished nor exhausted. Every soul may open itself to the divine luminary, and its radiance is only the greater; every soul may close itself to it, and it still shines serenely on. It is a cheering and enkindling faith, that the divine Spirit thus draws nigh to the human and invites it to enter into communion. Ah! without it, how could prayer be

real, and religion experimental and vital? May a living, personal experience enable us to realize its blessedness.

HUMAN NATURE.

We believe in man. We know from inward experience and from observation, that he often sadly wanders in error and sinks deep in sin; but still we believe in him, because he is a child of God, the heir of immortality. God believes in him, for He loves him, and the divine love attests belief and hope. Jesus believed in him, seeing in the worst of human beings a capacity of receiving the divine grace and of entering upon that heavenward course, that progression in truth and good, which has beginning but knows no end. We do not realize how fully Jesus believed in man, until we remind ourselves or are reminded that he had words of love and hope for the veriest outcast. Pharisaism might scorn and bigotry hate; Jesus had scorn and hate for none. And what faith in man he manifested in giving, not to the gifted and cultured few, but to plain, unlettered men, to the common people, to the men and women representative of our general humanity, sublimest truths—truths that transcend the sun in brightness, and shall continue in undiminishing luster after it has ceased to shine—and inviting them, in inviting all, to enter into filial union with the Most High.

We believe in man. Sometimes it is very hard to believe in this or that man—he is so covetous, base, false, or so self-righteous and unloving; and in this or that woman—she is so frivolous, so immersed in fashion, and so insincere; but when we remember that the divine image, however obscured and defaced, still remains on the plate of their souls, and remember that the Father still

loves them, and remember, too, that he still loves us notwithstanding our errors and sins—greater, perhaps, to the eyes of impartial justice than theirs—we hold fast to our belief in man.

God help us to attest the depth and power of our belief by a broader charity, a tenderer sympathy, a more active beneficence. Let warm hearts, open hands, kindly deeds, exhaustless patience, and undying hope show our fellowmen that we believe in them and love them.

THE BIBLE.

We believe in the Bible. It is to us the most precious of books, the book of books, addressed to our reason, conscience, and faith; in which good men, truth-loving, honest men, inspired by the Holy Spirit, have given to us sacred histories, far-reaching prophesies, soul-moving religious poems; have unfolded the laws of the divine Providence in creation and redemption, raised the curtain from the spiritual world, and disclosed to us the all-loving heart of God.

We believe in the Bible as a book to be thoughtfully read, reverently studied, in the spirit and love of truth. Too profound respect have we for the sacred volume to think for a moment that it would have us come to its perusal with closed minds, or minds fearful of letting in upon its pages the full light of truth, from whatever quarter the light may come. The more light the better. Like those chemical paintings which at first seem fragmentary and incomplete, but become symmetrical and beautiful as the light grows stronger, the truths of the Bible reveal more and more of their divine beauty in proportion to the intensity of the light thrown upon them by an ever-ad-

vancing Christian civilization. Great scepticism undoubtedly there is about the teachings of the Bible, no small part of which scepticism is owing to false claims, claims that it makes not for itself, to narrow interpretations, and to the jealous apprehensions manifested by some of its professed friends in regard to reason and science as if essentially irreligious and atheistic; but, notwithstanding all doubts and difficulties, never were its truths so distinctly seen, nor their power so widely felt as now. The clearer the atmosphere the brighter the shining of the stars; the clearer the moral atmosphere, the brighter the shining of the star-like truths of revelation.

We believe in the Bible as a book to be used, to be made a spiritual companion and friend, not as a show-volume to be handsomely bound and placed upon a center-table to remain there unopened except when a minister is a guest in the home, or some sad and solemn occasion calls for its consolations.

We believe in making this ever-living book, alike venerable in its age and winning in its immortal youth, the book of life; not in keeping it as an amulet or charm to be resorted to in times of peril, as by the alarmed passenger, mentioned, I think, by Alexander Campbell, who, when the storm became terrific and the vessel was in imminent danger of foundering, opened his Bible and read with eagerness, not the devout, faith-inspiring psalms of David or the soul-sustaining words of Jesus, but the list of names in the first chapter of the first book of Chronicles.

We believe in the Bible. May the spirit of truth help us more and more to discern its deep and varied significance, to penetrate farther into its rich mines, to appreciate better its gracious revealings, and to apply its instructions more faithfully to daily life.

THE CHURCH.

We believe in the church. "But in which one of the many?" In all, I might reply, so far as they revere and obey God and have the spirit and truth of Jesus, for where reverence and obedience, the love of truth and charity are, there the church of Christ is. It is *his* church in which we believe, with its sacred ordinances, its hallowed and hallowing associations, its inexhaustible fountains of spiritual life and power; the only really, truly, Catholic church, not sacerdotal, but fraternal; a fellowship, not a hierarchy; lovingly inclusive, not harshly exclusive; which welcomes to its communion all who desire to possess the spirit and obey the commands of Jesus; which makes life and character, not formal observances and verbal professions, the proof of discipleship; of which all true-hearted, devout, loving Christians of every name are members; aye, and the unnamed faithful ones, too, unnamed in earthly records, not in the Father's unerring book of remembrance. That is the church in which we believe, which can be monopolized by no sect, state, nation, country, age, but is the all-comprehending, ever-living church of God, the heavenly Father, into which it is our faith that the Saviour will ultimately transfigure the great brotherhood of humanity.

We believe in the church of Christ. Life is too real, too earnest; we meet too many tear-furrowed faces; we hear too many sighs and sobs from anguished and breaking hearts; there are too many grassy mounds over the forms of the dearly loved, for us to feel any special interest in questions of robes and vestments. No thought of bands or cassock, we imagine, came to Jesus when he uttered his Sermon on the Mount, or to his great apostle when standing on Mars' Hill. But we trust that we cherish, in com-

mon with all earnest workers, the desire to see the church arrayed in her robe of righteousness, wearing every where the beautiful garments of love and charity. God help us by greater obedience to his commands, by heartier acceptance of its spirit, by warmer kindness and more constant attention to the lowly, the friendless, and the erring, to attest our belief and increase its power.

LOVE—THE SOUL OF RELIGION.

We believe in religion, and that its essence is not rite nor form, but love—love to God and love to man; the love which is the life of piety, the vital principle and inspiration of beneficence, the spirit and law of righteousness, the condition, test, and proof of right being and right doing, the real and only true bond of fellowship between man and man, and of the inseparable union of man with his heavenly Father. We believe that every sincere lover of God and man, of whatever race, country, or clime, of whatever communion or creed, is dear to the all-loving Saviour; and we believe that Christianity, through which religion is thus presented in its essential character, spiritual beauty, and moral power, and forever distinguished from superstition and formalism, is divinely adapted to fill the heart with love and make the earth bloom as the garden of the Lord.

O that we may see with clear eye religion in her beauty and feel her gladdening, transforming power in our hearts!

IMMORTALITY.

We believe in immortality as brought to light by Jesus; not the dim, shadowy, gloomy abode of phantoms, but the

world of reality, where live and love the purified ones of earth, clothed in spiritual bodies and rejoicing in the beneficent activities of the realm of light, "the land of the leal;" and we believe in that world not as far removed but as near—how near God knows—and needing only the spiritual eye to be opened and the spiritual ear unsealed to discern its beauty and catch its melodies. Father, grant us the loving heart, the faithful spirit, the seeing eye, the hearing ear, that we may feel the strong attractive power of the world of light and live as its children!

THE HEAVENLY REUNION.

We believe that, under the moral government of God, retribution is just, impartial, inevitable, and that there can be no real, enduring happiness until there is full obedience to his laws. We believe, moreover, that through the winning influence of the Saviour and the renewing power of the Spirit, every prodigal will ultimately be brought, penitent and contrite, to the Father's heart, that the mediatorial work will find its glorious consummation in the ingathering of all souls to unite, with gladness and gratitude, in the song of the heavenly harvest-home.

May we all feel to the depths of our being the mighty spiritual force that seeks to win us to holiness and God.

HEART-FELT FAITH.

Finally, we believe, as some one has emphatically said, in belief, not in make-belief, regarding the strong conviction, the clear perception, the cordial acceptance of a single truth with faithful performing of the duties involved as of more worth than careless, traditional assent to a ream-

of formulas and confessions. He who earnestly grasps one truth and faithfully discharges one duty will ultimately attain and perform all. That one petition of the poor publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner," sent out from a heart agonized with a sense of sin and yearning for divine love and pardon, went direct to the inmost heaven and brought back peace, strength, hope, trust. His was belief. The elaborate address of the self-satisfied Pharisee, to the Saviour's keen eye, revealed only traditional and illusory make-belief.

May the Holy Spirit, the spirit of life and earnestness, aid us in believing, and save us from the illusions and delusions of make-believing.

I have now given to you what seems to me a fair statement of the faith of a Unitarian Christian.

I do not say of all Unitarians, for there are the wide differences among us which the terms "Conservative" and "Radical" indicate; and doubtless to some, perhaps many, the representation would not be satisfactory. But it is my faith and the faith of many, of a great majority I think, of those who are known as Unitarian Christians. To us it is a precious faith. Sacred memories cluster around it. Our minds find satisfaction in it and our hearts are comforted by it. A good faith, it seems to us, to live by and to die by. We thank our Father and his dear Son for it, and only regret that we have not been more faithful to its promises, duties, and inspirations.

"Press on, press on! ye sons of light,
Untiring in your holy fight,
Still treading each temptation down,
And battling for a higher crown.

"Press on, press on! through toil and woe,
With calm resolve to triumph go;
And make each dark and threatening ill
Yield but a higher glory still.

"Press on, press on! still look in faith
To Him who conquereth sin and death:
Then shall ye hear his word, 'Well done!'
True to the last, press on, press on."

William Gaskell.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST:

Or, the Church and Society of the Future.

PALM-SUNDAY SUGGESTIONS.

"For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself."—*Romans* xiv, 7.

This strong, comprehensive declaration of the apostle has a two-fold application, Godward and manward. Godward, for, as St. Paul says, "Whether we live, we live unto the Lord, and whether we die, we die unto the Lord." We are not our own in any absolute, independent way; we hold not life or possession in fee-simple, but as stewards of God, to whom we are accountable for right use of life, talent, all that life covers and implies. Manward, because we are so closely bound with our kind, with the great human brotherhood, that we can not isolate ourselves, but directly or indirectly must influence and affect, more or less, for good or ill, all of the great family.

"No one liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." If a man lives—not merely exists, but *lives*—lives a real, genuine, noble life, he lives that life not for himself alone, but for others, for how many others neither he nor any one else can tell. If he dies, dies morally, spiritually, becomes mean, selfish, base, corrupt, he dies not for himself

only, but for others, brings two-fold death, the death of hope and happiness in those who love him and desire his real good, the death of virtue in those whom his ill conduct and wrong spirit lead astray.

"No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." The good and the evil in him survive—the evil, we may hope, not forever, because it belongs to the realm of darkness and falsity, the realm of negation, and therefore of final evanescence; but the good forever, because belonging to the kingdom of light and truth, the kingdom of affirmation, of the substantial and enduring.

"The survival of the fittest" is a doctrine very prominent now in natural history and science. There is a profound truth in the doctrine, and one which finds many illustrations in the mental, moral, and spiritual as well as in the material world. In the mental world: Great thinkers survive. Centuries roll by, empires rise and fall, nationalities appear and vanish, civilizations culminate and decline, but the great thinkers survive all alternations, appearing and re-appearing in the profound thoughts which they have sent abroad, and which live, are charged with immortality, because they are fittest to live. Plato and Aristotle, by eminence the thinkers of Greece, representatives of the two dominant schools of thought, and of the classes of mind that those schools indicate, and of the philosophic systems in which those minds find expression, those two great men have been thinkers for the world no less than for their own land and their own age. Their thoughts and their modes of thought have survived because fit to survive, being instinct with vital power.

All large, noble thoughts, all grand truths survive. They enter the general mind, enriching, expanding, ennobling the mental life of the world. The eminent lawyers, the great

jurists of Rome live to-day in the laws and jurisprudence of Europe and America. No great thought is born to die.

The moral world no less than the mental abounds in illustrative instances. GREAT CHARACTERS SURVIVE. Bunsen says, "Personality is the lever of the world's history." What a marvelous power a great personality is! How living, how effective, not for an age, but for the ages! Prof. Hedge says in his thought-stirring book, "Ways of the Spirit:" "Abraham is the first distinct historic personality. Not the first historic personage, for Egyptian history was old and had dragged the chain of its successive dynasties through long centuries when the great Chaldean pitched his tent on the plains of Moab. But Egyptian history in all those ages presents no defined individuality, no character sufficiently marked to 'point a moral or adorn a tale.' The dynasties evoked by the Egyptologer out of the dim past, like the phantom succession of Scottish kings evoked from the dim future by the witches in Macbeth, 'Come like shadows, so depart.' . . . . The first defined personality, the first live figure, the first blood-warm individual known to history is also the first reformer, the first monotheist, the patriarch Abraham."

A great personality that was, a noble, majestic character! How it towers aloft in solitary grandeur! How measureless its influence, revered as it has been by millions upon millions of the race, Jews, Mohammedans, Christians, Semitic and Japhetic, of all surroundings and of every grade of culture, from the unlettered Bedouin reverently kneeling on the sands of Arabia, with face turned toward Mecca, to sages of rarest wisdom like Moses Mendelssohn, and richly-endowed scientists like Sir Isaac Newton.

A great personality is vital all through. Forever power

goes forth from it. Let but the hem of its garment be lovingly and reverently touched, and that power is felt vibrating, thrilling through every mental and moral fiber and nerve.

There is a day in the ecclesiastical calendar which is observed from year to year in many churches of Roman Catholic, Episcopalian, and other communions with peculiar solemnities. Palm-trees are brought in and palm-branches waved in commemoration of a memorable event. Palm Sunday, it is called, in remembrance of that day, long centuries ago, on which, amid the shouts and hallelujahs of a vast multitude, wrought by patriotic hopes and religious longings to wildest enthusiasm, entered into the city of Jerusalem one who, in less than a week thereafter, was to die in agony amid the scoffs and jeers of a disappointed, maddened throng, singing no hallelujah-notes, no anthem-strains, but shrieking forth the cruel passion-cry, "Crucify him, crucify him!"

"False, miserably false emblems," says some one, "those victory-presaging palms proved." But, good friend, were they false? Pause a moment and consider. Perhaps you may find that they were wonderfully significant, spiritually expressive, and beautifully prophetic of the victor-path of the great Teacher and Leader! Estimated by the hopes, judged by the expectations of the Jerusalem masses, ready, as the promiscuous throngs of any other city, to curse or to crown as passions bid, those palm-branches sadly failed of all true symbolism. But when we have to do with great events, big with destiny, with lives that are to mold myriads of lives, we must, if we would find emblematic significance, true symbolism, look elsewhere than to the thin, superficial soil of passion and caprice; we must go down, down into the depths, where deep cries unto deep, and the great

Nature around appeals to the great Nature within. Then with the eye of the soul open and its ear all attent, the mystic correspondence which unites us to the whole universe is felt, and its rich, full symbolism is discerned. Then the Palm-branches, not as waved by capricious crowds, but as borne by majestic Nature, solemn Sibyl, revealing Prophetess, are seen to be grandest, truest emblems, symbolizing victory real and enduring.

And how marvelous that victory was! To human eye and thought, regarding Jesus through the days succeeding Palm Sunday, following him through the varying scenes of Gethsemane loneliness and spiritual conflict, of arrest by rude soldiery, of abandonment by terrified friends, of betrayal by treachery, of condemnation by relentless hate, and of agonizing death—to the eye and thought thus accompanying him from Sunday to Friday, how incredible—not incredible only, impossible—would it seem that *that* betrayed, deserted, crucified One could become the author of a great religion, the spiritual guide, friend, comforter of myriads upon myriads of men and women—their hope, their confidence, their joy! The most marvelous of miracles would seem less miraculous, the most stupendous exercise of supernatural power less incredible. But man's impossibility was God's possibility. There was beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. From death came life, defeat was transformed into victory—victory so complete, so gladdening, that you may well bring palm-branches, not palm-branches only, but all of Nature's grandest emblems, to symbolize the great triumph. The Christ survived, the religion of the Christ survived; and because they were the fittest to survive.

"Personality is indeed the lever of the world's history."

And because the personality of Jesus, our Leader and Saviour, was the grandest, the noblest, the most winning, and the most divine, it has moved the world's history more powerfully, more resistlessly, than any other, than all other personalities combined. Not a human God, as mediævalism feigned him, but a divine man, as the profoundest thought, and the warmest, the most revering affection of the highest civilization clearly discern and gratefully accept him.

Through what floods of fire and water has that personality passed, what perils it has survived! The great empire, whose power at the time of the crucifixion was felt from the Atlantic Ocean to the Euphrates, whose legions' measured steps were heard from Britain to India, making three continents tremble, that colossal empire fell, and in its fall, like the dying Samson, pulled down with it the great temple of civilization. Rome fell, Constantinople fell, Northern barbarism and paganism rolled like a deluge over earth's fairest, loveliest scenes, the volcanic forces of mediæval superstition threw their dust and ashes and burning lava around, the earthquake passions of fierce, unrestrained humanity tore asunder every social fabric; worldly ambition and ecclesiastical love of dominion sacrilegiously took to themselves the sacred name, stealing heaven's livery to serve the devil in; false philosophy in Christ's name, supplanted his principles and truths by harsh, cruel dogmas; formalism set aside the spiritual worship which he enjoined, metaphysical scholasticism filled the atmosphere with blinding dust, and not star-dust either; tyranny's leagues unholily called themselves holy alliances—every thing conceivable has been done to pervert the religion of Jesus and make his name unacceptable to the aching, longing heart of humanity. But in spite of fire

and flood, of perversion and misrepresentation, of bigotry and tyrannous wrong in church and state, he and his religion have survived, and not only have survived, but have gone on conquering and to conquer, leading civilization, changing and ennobling society, effecting grandest reconciliations between God and man, between man and man.

"Personality is the lever of the world's history." No wonder that *that* personality, luminous with divine light, fragrant with heavenly love, transparent in truth, firm and solid in integrity and justice, beautiful in tenderness and compassionateness, all-winning in sympathy and charity, has moved the world, as no other has moved it, through every fiber of its being, through every power of its mind, every affection of its heart, every aspiration of its soul.

"Yes, unquestionably," I hear it whispered, "Jesus and his religion have survived through these centuries, and because they were fit to survive; but they have done their work—they belong to the Past."

Belong to the Past! If I read and interpret history and society aright, to no Past have they so completely belonged as they belong to this living Present, for never as now did the principles and Spirit of Jesus so pervade the world's humane and beneficent institutions, never so deeply and so widely affect civilization. Never was his religion so free from mediæval accretions as now. Constantly with the uplifting and Christianization of society mediæval accretions are dropping off, and as they drop off the religion appears and will appear more and more in its beautiful original character, not as harsh dogma and petrifying form, but as animating, purifying, ennobling, transfiguring spirit, principle, life. And as the religion is more vividly revealed in its original and divine simplicity and purity, it is gladly recognized as the most precious palimpsest, and

the character of Jesus stands out clear, distinct, full-orbed, in its beauty, grandeur, and rare attractive power, the personality of personalities, the Son of man transfigured into the Son of God.

As with mental eye men view that character, and as they reflect upon the sources of its greatness and deathless influence, they will appreciate more thoroughly the all-important fact, the fundamental truth, that the great end of religion is to bless the world in building up true, noble, ennobling Christ-like characters, in helping men to live genuine lives, lives accordant with the everlasting principles of truth, rectitude, and honor. Be it ever borne in mind that God is most honored, and his children of the great human family most aided, when men live Christ-like lives, when they do all in their power to lessen the burdens of their fellow-travelers, to diminish temptation, to strengthen virtuous principles, to make society a brotherhood, and fellowship a real friendship—in a word, when, with the divine help never withheld from the earnest seeker, they form characters that rest upon the granite foundations of the Sermon on the Mount, when from day to day they live lives that are fragrant with the spirit which prompts men to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and the prisoner, and which draws to itself the blessing of Him who said, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these, my disciples, ye have done it unto me."

That is the religion, which has survived because fittest to survive, and which will survive—the Religion of the Future. And as it is the grand distinction of humanity's great Leader that he willingly, lovingly, heartily identified himself with the lowliest of the children of God, the humblest of men, so that Church, that Society, will prove

itself most thoroughly and enduringly the Church and Society of the Future, which, being pervaded, permeated by his self-denying spirit, shall do its utmost to exalt fellowship into real friendship and friendship into that genuine Christian brotherhood, whose cheering presence and inspiring influence are most effective in transforming earth into the garden of the Lord.

"How rich the blessings, Oh, my God,
Which teach this grateful heart to glow!
How kindly poured and free bestowed
The rivers of Thy mercy flow!

"How calmly rolls the sea of life!
Secure in Thine immortal trust
The soul has hushed her secret strife,
Nor longer shudders at the dust.

"Though sorrow's cloud awhile o'ercast
The dawn of earthly hope and joy,
She knows that it must soon be passed,
And will unveil eternity.

"Then virtue's humble toil and prayer
Shall stand acknowledged at Thy throne,
Triumphant over earthly care,
And the blest record Thou wilt own."

J. Roscoe.

OLIVET'S TWO SIDES.

Gethsemane and Bethany.

"And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives."—*Matthew* xxvi, 30.

"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.—*Matthew* xxvi, 36.

"And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."—*Luke* xxiv, 50, 51.

How many intensely interesting associations cluster around that mountain-ridge to the east of Jerusalem known as the Mount of Olives! How many events are connected with it of vital importance, morally and spiritually, to the world! How many scenes did it witness full of pathos and of grandeur!

Two of these scenes are presented in the passages which I have brought together to form our text this morning—the *anguish scene* in *Gethsemane*, the *ascension scene* near *Bethany*. Both places belong to the Mount of Olives, the first being at its foot on the west near Jerusalem, the other higher up the mountain and on its eastern side. Not far apart are the places; in a short time one

could walk from one to the other. But how widely removed each from the other in the nature of the events which have rendered them forever memorable. In the one we have mental agony, the keenest known by any one dwelling in mortal form; anguish of soul, and that soul the purest, the noblest that ever inhabited earth, the only one free from imperfection and sin, celestial, divine, which by heavenly sympathy entered with exquisite tenderness into human sufferings, took upon itself humanity's heavy burden, sweetly submitted to trials providentially appointed for the fulfillment of the divine will and the redemption of man from the fearful power of sin, trials so keen as to cause the sweat as it were great drops of blood to fall from his brow.

Ah, Gethsemane, fearful was the agony known in thy lone garden by the meek and innocent One! There did the mystery of suffering culminate. Always mysterious is it as permitted in the realms of the infinitely good God, especially the suffering endured by the innocent; but there was it the mystery of mysteries, for the sufferer was the holy One, who knew no sin, and whose whole being was in perfect harmony with the Father's will. And yet in proportion to his holiness was the intensity of the anguish endured. How strange appears it that he should have suffered at all! To our fond, revering love it seems that for him, the kind, devout, ever-obedient Son of God, the pilgrimage through life should have been smooth and easy, sun-lighted and made fragrant by flowers of paradise, and that its close should have been illumined by light brighter than the radiance of the noon-day sun, and gladdened by the triumphant strains of angel choirs. But no; it pleased the All-Wise that it should be a pilgrimage of poverty and pain, marked by privation and sharp limitations, made

lustrous, indeed, by love, before whose brightness the all-glowing sun grows pale, and rendered beautiful by deeds of kindness exhaling fragrance such as the flowers of paradise never knew, yet to human eye a pilgrimage sad and dark, according to the judgment of human wisdom and the measures of earthly ambition, knowing only disappointment and failure, and brought to a premature and untimely end.

Oh, Gethsemane! when amid thy deep shades that pure and perfect one knelt, prostrated to earth by anguish, the anguish of a soul large enough and tender enough to take humanity in its loving embrace and to be willing to die for its redemption from sin and woe, it seemed indeed, as the Saviour said, as if it were the hour and the power of darkness. Then the spirit of darkness appeared to have gained the supremacy, to rule with unchecked sway. Before its malignant scepter truth and goodness were crushed to earth, the best of beings led to cruel death, and the holiest of causes doomed to annihilation. Then Satan seemed to have usurped the throne of universal dominion, and to be left unrestrained to do his work of woe. The hour and the power of darkness indeed, to mortal eye the darkest hour, the hour most fraught with wretchedness and despair that the world had ever known, in which hope herself with breaking heart might lay her down to die.

But thick and deep as was the gloom of Gethsemane, perplexing as was the mystery of goodness crushed and wickedness triumphant, God had not been dethroned, the spirit of darkness had not grasped the scepter of omnipotence. The hour of its power was the hour of its ruin. In wreaking its vindictiveness upon the spotless Son of God, it showed its utter malignity, and this it was, in the divine providence, permitted to show not only to disclose its

essential vileness, but also to reveal the majesty of that divine power of life and goodness which was willing to be humiliated and prostrated by it, even to the dust, and to be placed in the tomb, that from seeming annihilation it should arise in strength and beauty, that it might conquer death even in death's royal palace, the sepulcher, and by love and holiness overcome sin and wrong on the very spot and in the very midst of their triumph. Thus God in his ineffable wisdom permits the dark mystery of Gethsemane, not for the sake of the mystery, nor that the mystery may forever remain dark and insoluble. Oh, no! but that the ascension-light of Bethany may shine upon it and make it bright and plain.

Olivet has its two sides, its western side of Gethsemane gloom and its eastern side of ascension glory. Through gloom to glory, through trial to triumph, through death to life, is God's order of providence for his children, and that order is revealed in fullness of purpose, in completeness of plan, in the pilgrimage of Him, His beloved Son, the type and the manifestation of perfect humanity, who by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and through sufferings was made perfect as the Captain of their salvation.

Jesus, on the memorable night which preceded his crucifixion, went to the western side of Olivet, to Gethsemane. A few hours pass by, and the form in which his holy soul dwelt is nailed to the cross and placed in the quiet tomb. A few more pass, and that form comes from the tomb transfigured by divine power, so changed as to become his fitting garment in the realm of immortality. A few days pass, the message which he has to communicate to his disciples is given, the work which he has to accomplish with them in his glorified body is done, the reality of his

new form and sphere of being is deeply, ineffaceably impressed upon their minds and hearts, life and immortality are brought to light to them and, through them, to the world, and he goes to the Mount of Olives again; but not now to its western side. Oh, no! for him no more of Gethsemane gloom, no more trial or tears, no more abandonment and pain. To the eastern side he goes, to Bethany, not Gethsemane, to the orient of life and glory. Very dear to him in his earthly sojourn had Bethany been. There he had had sweetest interchange of thought and feeling with spiritually-minded, appreciative friends, thither he had loved to go, after the excitement of the day, from crowds who gathered around him with mingled motives, to enjoy the evening hours in communion with that quiet, unassuming, refined family whose souls responded to his as he spake of the Father and of heaven, of duty and immortality. There, impelled by the mighty affection for the bereaved family which filled his heart, and invited by the faith which with sweet trust reposed in his words, he had performed his most stupendous miracle. Thither now he goes again, leading his little band of disciples, who lovingly follow him in awe but not in fear. There he converses with them freely, and with the same tenderness and thoughtful kindness which characterized his words and spirit while he was in the earthly form. And oh, how deep, how thrilling the interest with which they listened to his words, the words of *Him*, their own dear Friend, Teacher, Redeemer, who, as one of their number with such deep pathos said, "having loved his own, loved them to the end," and who, as they now know, has loved them beyond the end, whose personal love for them ceased not when his earthly life ended, but continues in all its gentleness and winning power now that he is invested with his garment

of immortality. The time has come for these precious utterances to cease, and for him to give them his parting benediction. "He lifted up his hands and blessed them." No cold, formal benediction was that, but the going forth to them of his own great, divine heart in blessing, the bringing down to their hearts the peace and spiritual joy with which his was full.

"And who saith 'I loved ONCE?'
Not angels—whose clear eyes love, love, foresee,
Love, through eternity,
And by To Love do apprehend To Be.
Not God, called Love, his noble crown-name, casting
A light too broad for blasting!
The great God changing not from everlasting,
Saith never, 'I loved once.'

"Oh, never is 'loved ONCE'
Thy word, thou Victim-Christ, misprized friend!
Thy cross and curse may rend,
But, having loved, Thou lovest to the end.
This is man's saying—man's. Too weak to move
One sphered star above,
Man desecrates the eternal God-word Love
By his No More and Once."

And in the very act of blessing them he was parted from them. Sweet and holy parting! Thus would every earnest and pure heart love to have its dearest and most honored friend pass on to the spiritual world, peacefully giving its blessing. Precious and fragrant forevermore the memory of such a parting, linking, as it does, the translated friend with the friend remaining behind. Unutterably, infinitely precious such a parting from the friend of friends, the great Mediator, who, in his wonderful personality, his

glorified humanity, binds the two worlds inseparably together, and who has power to bring the mighty blessing down.

The disciples felt the reality of his benediction. They saw him pass away, and knew that he would be no more visible to them on earth, but there was no sadness in their hearts. Nay, their hearts were full of joy. They felt the power of the world to come. To them it had already come. The veil was raised, the partition-wall removed, the world of immortality made near and real. When they saw his cold form after the cruel crucifixion placed in the tomb, their souls were dark and gloomy. Then were they on the western side of Olivet, then death had the victory; but now they have passed to the eastern side where life is the conqueror. Then were they in Gethsemane's thick, deep gloom, now are they in Bethany's glorious ascension-light. For them the mystery is solved, the enigma made plain. The suffering which made the garden of Gethsemane so dark was permitted, not for its own sake, but that it might be the means and occasion of overcoming the power of sin and enthroning love and holiness. The night of Gethsemane was permitted and decreed not for Gethsemane, but for the glorious ascension-morning.

"WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR THE NIGHT, BUT JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING."

"Deem not that they are blessed alone
Whose days a peaceful tenor keep;
The God, who loves our race, has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

"The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

"There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night,
And Grief may bide an evening guest
But Joy shall come with early light.

"And thou, who o'er thy friend's low bier,
Dost shed the bitter drops like rain,
Hope that a brighter, happier sphere
May give him to thy arms again.

"Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny,
Though, with a pierced and bleeding heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

"For God hath marked each sorrowing day
And numbered every secret tear,
And heaven's long age of bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here."

WILLIAM C. BRYANT.

THE TWO ASPECTS OF THE DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

"And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: and it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night."—*Exodus* xiv, 19, 20.

To the one the mysterious pillar was all cloud and darkness—repelling, depressing gloom; to the other it was all brightness—illumining and gladdening radiance. How symbolic this of the divine providence, of the different aspects which it presents to the pilgrims of life, the travelers of earth on their varied and deeply-interesting journey: to some, as the cloudy pillar to the Egyptians, it seems gloomy, impenetrable darkness; to others, as to the favored Israelites, it seems inspiring brightness. That providence not only *seems* different to different persons, it *is* different; that is, in the widely-varying experiences, in the differing proportions of good and ill fortune which it assigns and ordains. We hear a great deal said, at times, of the principle of compensation. Life, according to some essayists and moralizers, is a compensation-pendulum, so nicely adjusted with its expanding and contracting metal bars that

it is perfectly fitted for all seasons and climes, and keeps perfect time and the same time for all; thus securing, it is asserted, an equal amount on the whole of good and ill, of joy and sorrow, to all.

Very elaborate are some of the essays in which this proposition has been presented, this argument maintained; essays written in faultless language and printed in clear type and on spotless white or delicately-tinted paper; and they have been read with delight by refined and highly-cultivated men and women sitting in comfortable chairs in cosy or elegant rooms before a cheerful fire; and the readers have assented to the argument as able and conclusive, and accepted the result as legitimate and sound, saying with much satisfaction, as they have closed the volume, "Mr. All-right has proved beyond doubt that after all, notwithstanding seeming differences, the proportion of happiness is essentially the same to all of us."

Not quite so conclusive has seemed the reasoning, not so satisfactory the result, to men and women living in hovels, wrestling all their lives with poverty and pain, finding life from beginning to end a hard struggle for bread; or to men and women for whom repeated bereavements have darkened existence, taken joy and hope from home, and made the mortal pilgrimage a dreary, lonely walk to the grave. What to them are the fine paper, the clear print, the fastidiously-chosen words, the elaborately-constructed sentences, when their hearts are desolate and their homes are shrouded in gloom, or when they know not where to find food for wife and children! Give to them in their anxieties and soul-weariness the carefully-reasoned essay on life's compensations, if you would have them feel that when they asked for bread you gave them a stone, and none the less a stone though of finest mar-

ble and exquisitely polished. No, that compensation theory will not do. It does not square with the facts of life. The proportion of good and ill, of happiness and sorrow, is by no means the same for all. For some there is a great deal of light all through their earthly existence; for some a great deal of darkness. Think of one blessed with devoted, loving, sincerely religious parents, with opportunities of intellectual culture, with books and a love for them, with remunerative employment, with a beautiful home of his own, and with all-animating hope; and then think of one with reckless and wretched parents, with no opportunities for mental development, with no means for advancement, with vicious companions, with hard toil unenlivened by hope, and what a mockery it seems to talk of the proportion of happiness being the same to all human beings. We only affront the unfortunate by such suggestions, and complicate instead of simplifying life's perplexing problem. The divine providence, I repeat, not only *seems* but *is* different in the differing proportion of good and ill, which it permits and decrees. The divine pillar is darkness to some and radiance to others; and why shall we affect to deny the fact? Are we wiser than God, that we should attempt to make out as unreal what He has made unmistakably real? Let us simply and reverently admit that the divine pillar presents these two aspects of light and darkness, that the divine providence allots very different measures of joy and sorrow, of pleasure and pain, to life's travelers.

How, then, shall we justify the divine dealings? Who are we, that we should take it upon ourselves to justify the workings and ways of the infinite Jehovah?

> "God is His own interpreter,
> And He will make it plain."

We honor Him best when we reverently bow before His appointments, when we look to the pillar of His providence as a *divine* pillar, whether it present a bright or dark aspect; and we best help the wretched and despairing, not by attempting to argue with them that the proportions of good and ill are about alike to all, that there is a skeleton in every house, that there is often keen misery within the home when externally all seems fair. Such arguing and asserting have no power to bind up broken hearts or to fill empty flour-barrels. By no such assertions or reasonings do we help them, but by frankly admitting that their lot is a hard one, by tenderly sympathizing with them, by lending them a helping hand, by proving real friends to them, and by accompanying acts of substantial kindness with unobtrusive but earnest suggestion that we all stand in the great hand of God; that He is infinite in power, wisdom, and love; that this life is not all, that we are but beginning here to learn His ways; that by and by more light will come, and if we will only do our best He will help us. Brotherly sympathy and solid kindness—they are better than all arguments, they make the heart's strong reasoning, which has tender affection for a premise, kindly deeds for its middle term, and grateful, reviving hope for its conclusion; and that is reasoning which the heart feels and accepts. Once convince the unhappy that they have in you, a fellow-mortal, a genuine friend, and you will have done more than any mere logician or all logicians can do to remove their doubts and to help them to confide in God. The reality of human friendship is the best intimation and foreshadowing of divine. The power of Christianity in removing doubts and in ministering to faith is not in elaborate argumentation, for such the gospel gives not, but in the friendship, the kindness, the redeeming love

of Jesus. *That* love, so deep, tender, deathless, has revealed to men the *divine*. Such love they have felt was divine. If the Son thus loved, how infinite the love of the Father.

The pillar of the divine providence has different aspects of brightness and gloom for different persons. Let us not try to reason away the fact or to conceal it by thick clouds of argumentative dust, but freely admit it. We best honor God, our Father, who is Truth, as He is Love, by truth, by perfect frankness, by acknowledging facts to be facts, however strange and perplexing they may appear to us, however difficult to be reconciled with our theory of life and the universe, or, so far as we can see, with His infinite and impartial goodness. He, we may be sure, is better pleased when in child-like spirit we say, "Father, we can not understand this and that dark experience, but we reverently bow before thy will," than when we undertake to show to our suffering fellow-mortals that there is no mystery, no perplexity, nothing hard to reconcile with the divine benignity; and to that reverent, loving, filial spirit much sooner comes, than to the self-confident and assuming, the light which dispels the darkness, and the hope which brings life and peace.

The pillar of the divine providence not only presents different aspects to different persons, but different aspects to the same person in his life-journey. At times it is very dark and gloomy, sorrows press upon one in close succession, disappointments, by their frequency and greatness, dishearten, the gleam and the beauty of life seem to have vanished forever. At other times it is almost dazzlingly bright, through the coming to us of exceeding happiness, through a fulfillment, surpassing expectation, of cherished hopes and the accomplishment of all-important plans.

Very different, utterly different, are these two aspects of the divine providence; and the fact of the difference let us freely and fully admit; admit, too, as we doubtless feel, that the greatness of the gloom and the greatness of the light alike exceed our power of complete explanation. Let us stand on the solid ground of fact and wait, in patience and trust, for our Father's own time and measure of explanation.

"They also serve who only stand and wait."

And though they may stand and wait in blindness and darkness, by and by to the brave soul light will come.

That the pillar of the divine providence presents these different aspects we know; *why* it presents them we do not fully know, nor can we perfectly know with the short-sightedness and amid the limitations of earth and mortality. But though the aspects are now bright, now dark, it is the pillar of the *divine* providence which presents them. That is the great, the fundamental, the all-essential fact. On that we can stand, and stand firm, calm, strong. And though with our limited range and little power of vision we may not now see why it presents them, we are assured that it is for reasons which commend themselves to infinite Wisdom and to impartial and undying Love, and which involve our ultimate and highest good, the real and enduring good of all the children of God. As presented in our text, the pillar is darkness to the Egyptians and light to the Israelites; but Egyptians and Israelites both belong to the heavenly Father's great family, and for that family He always cares, and on its true welfare he is always intent. In His leading of the Israelites to the promised land He was not leading them only, but, in fact, the Egyptians also;

that is, he was leading all humanity. In His dealings with the Israelites He was educating and developing them, making them, as a people, the medium for the transmission and illustration of most sacred and precious truths, not for their sake only, but for the sake of the whole human family. Ultimately, through Moses the great law-giver, and the grand line of prophets and seers, and the Teacher and Redeemer for whom they prepared the way, in whose sun-like brilliance their single rays were to be merged—light swallowed up in greater light—all branches of the great family, all kindreds, tribes, and nations were to be blessed. In the final blessing the Egyptians, as all other members, were to share; and thus for them, too, though the pillar presented an aspect of cloud and gloom, it was nevertheless the pillar of the divine providence.

The lesson thus taught is of wide, universal applicability. Consider it. It is the essential oneness, the solidarity of the race of man, constituting, through all the ages and in all climes, one family — God's great human family—the family of the one Father; and this family He is ever leading through the wilderness of inexperience and probationary, disciplinary trials toward the land of promise, the Canaan of higher truth, of deeper faith, of larger knowledge, of purer piety, of more active and disinterested beneficence. It is this family that the pillar of the divine providence is always guiding. To one portion it may now present a dark, to another a bright aspect, but to the family, the whole family, and always, it is the pillar of the divine providence, and under its guidance the family is steadily moving on. Slow may the movement of the pillar seem, and slow the progress of the family be. Slow seemed the journeying of the Israelitish people through the wilderness and oft were they impatient, but in good time, in God's

own time, which is always good, the land of promise was reached. In His own good time His great family will reach its promised land; and during its marchings the pillar will never fail to attend and guide them, and they will always find it, whether presenting a bright or dark aspect, the pillar of *a divine* providence.

How cheering in thought, how soothing, and at the same time how strengthening, are the lines in our Quaker Poet's hymn of love and trust:

"Enough that blessings undeserved
Have marked my erring track;
That, wheresoe'er my feet have swerved
Thy chastening turned me back;

"That more and more a providence
Of love is understood,
Making the springs of time and sense
Sweet with eternal good;

"That death seems but a covered way
Which opens into light,
Wherein no blinded child can stray
Beyond the Father's sight.

"No longer forward or behind
I look, in hope or fear,
But grateful take the good I find,
God's blessing now and here."

ETERNAL LIGHT.

"Slowly, by God's hand unfurled,
Down around the weary world
Falls the darkness; oh! how still
Is the working of His will!

"Mighty Spirit, ever nigh,
Work in me as silently;
Veil the day's distracting sights,
Show me heaven's eternal lights.

"Living stars to view be brought,
In the boundless realm of thought;
High and infinite desires,
Flaming like those upper fires.

"Holy Truth, Eternal Right,
Let them break upon my sight;
Let them shine serene and still,
And with light my being fill."

W. H. Furness.

"God hides Himself within the love
Of those whom we love best;
The smiles and tones that make our homes
Are shrines by Him possessed.
He tents within the lonely heart,
And shepherds every thought;
We find Him not by seeking long,
We lose Him not, unsought."

WILLIAM C. GANNETT.

RIGHTEOUSNESS:

Or, Life on the Square.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."—*Matthew* v, 6.

The answer in the Westminster Catechism to the question, "What is the chief end of man?" is "To glorify God and to enjoy him forever." A grand answer it is, clean-cut, pithy, telling. Nothing can be finer, completer, more satisfactory, provided only that you give a broad and just interpretation to the terms used. What is it to glorify God? "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," is the language of one of the sublimest Psalms. But what is it to offer praise, acceptable praise, to God? We have the answer at hand in the words with which the psalmist ends his glorious hymn: "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God." "Conversation" in the Bible use of the word is equivalent to "life." A rightly-ordered life, then, is man's truest anthem of divine praise, his noblest, sweetest, richest, grandest symphony. But what is a rightly-ordered life? A life based upon divine principles, the everlasting principles of rectitude, and pervaded by the spirit of reverence, truth, justice, tenderness, and charity. In other words, it is a righteous life, the life of one who aims to be right, and to do right;

and to him who thus ordereth his conversation, who with manliness of soul, sincerely, penitently, earnestly, makes, or with all his heart tries to make, his life in little things and in great, in private and in public, true, on the square—to that man the salvation of God is shown on earth and in heaven. This is the law and the prophets. "To obey is better than sacrifice." "Create in me a clean heart, O God! and renew a right spirit within me." "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well. Seek judgment; relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." "By their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto

one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

That is the Bible teaching about righteousness. Men, because of difference in mental powers and tendencies, in education and association, may honestly differ in regard to the scripture teachings upon recondite themes such as are involved in doctrines of Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement; but a man must be incapable of seeing any brightness in the sun's noonday light, who fails to see that the Bible in both Testaments bears overwhelming attestation not only to righteousness as of supreme importance, but also to it as the great end set before man by religion and in the providential discipline of life. This is the end to which and for which churches, ordinances, sacraments, and the varied apparatus and appliances of mental and moral education are instruments and means. And if men, because of having their mental eyes temporarily blinded by theologic dust, or their minds confused by metaphysical subtlety and sophistry, are in doubt as to what the Bible means by righteousness, bid them read the words of St. John the evangelist, "Let no one deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous;"—words as accordant with sturdy common sense as with the finest spirit of religion—and they will see that when the writers of the Bible speak of righteousness they mean just what the word itself, on the surface and in its depths, implies, rightness of heart and rightness of life before God and man. And this rightness, this real, genuine, practical righteousness is just what is needed in church and state, in homes and places of business—every where and always. It is the transfiguration of daily living by the two great commandments, and when

this transfiguration shall become complete, the beautiful vision will be made real of "New heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

O for righteousness — personal, individual, practical, living righteousness! One's heart sometimes almost fails him, and he trembles for his country and for the world when he sees the wide prevalence and the mighty influence of unrighteousness. How sickening ofttimes the record in the daily papers of drunkenness and debauchery, not merely among the ignorant and debased, but also in what are called the better classes of society! How frequent the occurrence of the crimes of sensualism, the deadly sins against the family and the home! How widely diffused the poison, the deadly virus of political corruption! How trickery, chicanery, bribery, and the degrading arts of the demagogue abound! How often, too, in commercial life, and in the manifold dealings of man with man, the sense of right is blunted, and the fine spirit of honor is wanting, which makes a word binding as a bond and gives to a promise sacramental power! I draw no disparaging contrasts between the past and the present, for in many respects the advantage is with the present; nor do I forget nor underrate the frequent manifestations of noblest qualities and grandest virtues, by which our age is frequently and vividly illustrated. I speak of the dark realities forced upon eye and thought, and of the powerful appeal made by them for solid righteousness.

One of the bravest, noblest, and grandest of the prophets, speaking in the name of his people when they were sunken in wretchedness and degradation, says, "Our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," meaning that real righteousness had largely disappeared, and that shams and pretenses had usurped its place. It is a singular and

strong illustration of the liability of the human mind to grossest delusions, that the denunciation by the straightforward, heroic prophet of unreal, hollow, falsely-called righteousness should have been utterly misinterpreted and perverted, as if he had meant to depreciate and protest against the efficiency and measureless value of genuine righteousness. The filthy rags of falsely-called righteousness are always an offense to God and to godly men, but evermore and only beautiful on earth and in heaven is the fine linen, clean and white, of genuine righteousness, the righteousness of God's true and loving children.

"Our people are very much afraid of morality and of the preaching of morality," said a bright, broad-minded Presbyterian minister lately in an interesting and telling sermon; "they are afraid of it; but for my part I think morality freely indulged in comes pretty near to religion." Very, very near to religion does real morality approach, as the Sermon on the Mount shows us; for that sermon, which is the condensed essence of divine inspiration, is the sermon of morality and religion, of vitalizing religion and of vitalized morality, or of righteousness, which is concrete and manifested religion.

As to the fear of morality and of moral preaching alluded to by our Presbyterian brother, it is easily enough accounted for. No small amount of preaching has been based upon the perversion of prophetic language just alluded to—a perversion made so complete at times, that ministers in the pulpit, after portraying noble and grand characters, characters marked by truth, unselfish heroism, unfaltering devotion to duty, and almost every human virtue, have said in substance that, notwithstanding all excellences, for want of some special experience, mental or spiritual, these men in the sight of God were unfit for heaven. No wonder that

when pulpits have thus misunderstood and perverted the teachings of prophets and apostles and of the great Teacher, God's well-beloved Son, many of the listeners have been led into unthinking dread of morality and moral preaching. Thank God, that style of pulpit instruction is growing obsolete.

But there is another reason why some good but not closely discriminating people have had apprehensions and fears in regard to morality and its preaching. They have seen too often that men, who have prided themselves upon morality, and have set morality over against religion, have not made such manifestations of morality as to render it altogether beautiful, satisfactory, and attractive. As thus illustrated, morality very frequently has been poor and thin enough, without spiritual earnestness, of course, but also without the fine enthusiasm of humanity.

Sufficiently observant of social decencies and proprieties, it has no heart throbbing with sympathy for humanity's sins, sorrows, and wrongs, and no healing balm for its wounds. In such morality there is no renovating, no quickening power, and one wonders not that men craving help and spiritual strength shrink from and dread it. Cruel mockery is it when hungry souls ask for bread to offer them stones. Morality of this kind is as far removed from the vitalized morality, the righteousness of the Bible, as is the sham and hollow righteousness denounced by the prophet.

All wrong are they on this side or that, who divorce religion and morality, and thus, so far as their influence goes, bar out from churches and communities that majestic, renewing, transforming Spirit of living and life-giving Righteousness, whose presence is incentive and inspiration.

Righteousness is the emphatic, the decisive, the ringing word from the lips of all the brave, true, white souls that

speak to us in both Testaments. And by righteousness they mean *right*eousness, not *rite*ousness. No more fatal wrong is done to character, no deadlier blow is struck at the foundations of society, than when the grand central Christ-idea is set aside, and "rite" is put in place of "right." Once lived in our community, and he was a worshiper in our church, a man of true and heroic spirit, who was as frank in speech as he was upright in character and straightforward in life, and one evening there came to his house a man professedly religious, a minister whom he received with cordial, generous hospitality. The visitor had come in regard to business of importance to some orphan children, and was invited to spend the night. At the supper-table his host asked him to invoke the divine blessing. When the meal was over our friend took his guest to a quiet room, where till a late hour the business arrangements were discussed. Much to the surprise of his wife, at breakfast the next morning her husband did not ask the guest to pray, and when the latter had gone she sought an explanation. The reply was, "I saw last night that that man did not mean to do the right and square thing by those children, and no man who would cheat the orphan and the friendless shall pray at my table." To this clear-eyed, venerable man the Sermon on the Mount meant something, and "rite" was nothing without "right." To him, as to the psalmist of old, the one thing certain and unmistakable was, "that the righteous Lord loveth righteousness." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

"HE THAT HATH SEEN ME HATH SEEN THE FATHER."

"O Love! O Life! our faith and sight
Thy presence maketh one:
As through transfigured clouds of white
We trace the noonday sun,

"So to our mortal eyes subdued,
Flesh-veiled, but not concealed,
We know in thee the fatherhood
And heart of God revealed.

"We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray;
But, dim or clear, we own in thee
The Light, the Truth, the Way.

"The homage that we render thee
Is still our Father's own;
Nor jealous claim or rivalry
Divides the Cross and Throne.

"To do thy will is more than praise,
As words are less than deeds;
And simple trust can find thy ways
We miss with chart of creeds.

"Our Friend, our Brother, and our Lord,
What may thy service be?
Not name, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following thee."

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

IMMANUEL, GOD WITH US, THE KEY-NOTE OF HISTORY.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON.

"They shall call his name Immanuel; which, being interpreted, is God with us."—*Matthew* i, 23.

Advent season, preceding and ushering in Christ's birth-day, is reverently celebrated by many Christians in ways fitly commemorative of the coming of One whose spirit, work, and influence were to affect sooner or later, and affect deeply, all men, all institutions, all civilizations. A wonderful person, by universal acknowledgment, was he who exerted and still exerts this immeasurable and deathless influence. Let him be placed in the scale of being wherever the theories, the love, the reverence, the superstition, the scepticism of men may place him—at the summit of creation, the Almighty God, the first of created beings, the head of angelic throngs, the first-born and dearest Son of God, or the man of Nazareth—however he may be regarded metaphysically or theologically, in fact, in life, in far-reaching power, by consent of all he stands forth the man of the ages, the providential man. Strauss may endeavor to resolve the gospel narratives into mere legends and his alleged deeds into myths, but Jesus is not resolved nor dissolved. Profound criticism, historical research, far-

reaching sagacity and loyalty to truth have placed the heroes and sages of other religions in nobler positions than were formerly assigned them, and justice long withheld has been finally accorded, but the placing of Zoroaster, Confucius, Buddha, Socrates, Mohammed, in their legitimate and honorable positions, has not lowered the position of Jesus. Regarded with less superstition than in former ages, he was never regarded with so much true reverence as now; never was his spirit so pervasive of the noblest civilization as it is to-day. Jean Paul Richter was no fanatical religionist, but he recognized the transcendent worth and power of Jesus, and gave expression to his realizing thought in words of signal power, wildly beautiful, wierd, and picturesque:

"There once trod our earth a single being, who, by his sole moral omnipotence, controlled other ages and founded an immortality peculiarly his own. He, gently blooming and tractable to influences from on high like the sun-flower, but in his ardor and power of attracting, a Sun, he, still with mildness of aspect, drew alike himself, nations, and ages, to the universal and original sun. It is the meek Spirit, whom we name Jesus Christ. If he was, then there is a Providence—or rather he was it." Dämmerungen für Deutschland—quoted by Olshausen, vol. 3, 156.

And Felix Adler, the distinguished radical Jew, speaks thus of the wonderful man:

"Whether we find him in the intimate circle of his disciples, whether he is instructing the multitude along the sunny shores of Lake Gennesareth, whether he stands before the tribunal of his judges, or in the last dire agonies of death, he is ever the patient man, the loving teacher, the man of sorrows, who looks beyond men and their crimes to an ideal humanity, and confides in that; who gives largely, and forgives even because he gives so much.

But we shall not touch the true secret of his power until we recall his sympathy with the neglected classes of society; that quality of his nature which caused the poor of Galilee to hail him as their deliverer, which produced so lasting an impression upon his contemporaries, and made the development of his doctrines into a great religion possible. His gospel was preëminently the gospel for the poor; he sat down with despised publicans; he did not shun the contamination of lepers, nay, nor of the moral leprosy of sin; he visited the hovels of paupers, and taught his disciples to prefer them to the mansions of the fortunate; he applied himself with peculiar fervor to those dumb, illiterate masses of Galilee, who knew not whither they might turn, to what they might cling. He gave them hope, he brought them help. And so it came about that in the early Christian communities which were still fresh from the presence of the Master, the appeal to conscience he had made so powerfully resulted in solid helpfulness; so it came about that in those pristine days the church was a real instrument of practical good, with few forms and little parade, but with love-feasts and the communion-table spread with repasts for the needy. 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, ... for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.'

"It is from such particulars that there was drawn that fascinating image, which has captivated the fancy and attracted the worship of mankind; the image of the pale man with the deep, earnest eyes, who roused men to new exertions for the good, who lifted up the downtrodden, who loved little children, and taught the older children in riddles and parables that they might understand, and the brief career of whose life was hallowed all the more in

memory, because of the mournful tragedy in which it closed. All the noblest qualities of humanity were put into this picture and made it lovely. It was the humanity, not the dogma of Jesus, by which Christianity triumphed. Like a refreshing shower in the perfumed spring, his glad tidings of a new enthusiasm for the good came upon the arid Roman world, sickening with the dry-rot of self-indulgence, and thirsting for some principle to give a purpose to the empty weariness of existence. Like a message from a sphere of light it spread to the Germanic tribes, tempered the harshness of their manners, taught them a higher law than that of force, and conquered their grim strength with the mild pleadings of the Master of meekness in far-off Galilee."

This was the providential man, the man of destiny, to whom was early applied the language of an ancient prophet, "They shall call his name Immanuel, which means God with us." A grand name it is, sublimely beautiful and wonderfully descriptive, vividly expressive of the profoundest of truths, THE INCARNATION OF DIVINITY IN HUMANITY, and exactly representative of his grand prerogative and influence in causing a realization of the great truth, the fact of facts — that God is with men, with us, with all.

From the beginning, the infinite Mind has expressed that central, dominating fact. He announced it when he created man in His own image. When He made the soul of the first man to mirror Himself, He declared that deep, solemn truth of incarnation, "God with us." He was with the first man, was in the first man—*with* him, close to him, environing him, and *in* him, as largely, as fully, as completely, as the receptivity of the soul of the first man would permit him to be; there was as much of the life of

God, as much of God himself, in that soul as it was capable of receiving. The bodily form of the first man, the part that allies him to the animal world—say what you will about that; let physiologists, anatomists, and chemists, with tests and analyses and microscope and scalpel do what they will; say, if you will, that it was created directly from the dust, taking literally the sacred narrative; or say, if you prefer, that it was the result of long, slow development and evolution—the great fact remains, and it makes that early Bible record shine with star-like radiance, that the soul of that man was made in the image of God. That is the great spiritual, religious, mental, moral, central fact: the fact which unites God with man and man with God. The first man, so far as his soul received God—mirrored, manifested Him—was Immanuel, "God with us;" and as that first man was representative of all men, so every man, just in proportion to his receptivity and to his actual reception of God, has been "Immanuel." Of the soul that somewhere, just now, is beginning its life-experience, it is true, as of the soul that opened in Paradise, that it is made in the divine image, and, thus made, it is receptive of God. Universal humanity thus becomes an announcement, an everliving and vivid expression of the grandest of facts, the most impressive of truths—the Incarnation, "Immanuel, God with us."

And this is the key-note of history, viz. that the infinite Spirit, the Father of souls, has been and is, always and every where, seeking to enter, to pervade, to fill, to ennoble, to transfigure every soul, that the earthly, selfish, animal, sensual elements may be subjected to the heavenly and the divine. This is the conflict of the ages; this is God's controversy with man, carried on not in wrath, but in love, for the exaltation of man to the highest plane, for the trans-

formation of society into beautiful, helpful, divinely-human brotherhood.

Many souls have been widely open, largely receptive of God, and His indwelling, illumining presence has made them light, life, and blessing to countless spirits. But one soul, *the Soul*, that which dwelt within the mortal form of Jesus, was from the beginning open to the infinite, inflowing, divine presence; open in childhood, youth, manhood; open in Nazareth, Bethany, Samaria, Jerusalem; open on the mount of transfiguration, in Gethsemane's garden, on the hill of Calvary; open in the hour of sweet interchange of thought with loved friends, in the hour of solitude, in the seasons when surging multitudes pressed around, hungry for the words of truth and thirsting for the gracious dew of love. With soul thus open to God and thus receptive of him, Jesus was filled with the divinity; every power, every faculty of his nature—moral, mental, emotional, spiritual—filled with God's thought, with His truth, His love, His holiness, His sympathy, His tenderness. How really, how truly, he thus became "Immanuel," God with us; and how really, how truly he thus became "man with us;" his manhood expanded, ennobled, exalted, illumined into divine humanity. Thus he became the man of men, the friend of friends; friend of the poor, friend of all, tender, compassionate, sympathetic, brave, heroic, loving with God's own love, and through that love made the reconciler, the atoner, mediator, uniter, father and founder of the new age, leader of humanity, conqueror of death, revealer of immortality.

You see where was the hiding of his power, what was the secret of his strength. It was his deep, living conviction that God was with him; that his ends, purposes, methods were those of God. "The words that I speak

unto you I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." "Immanuel"—God with me—that was the key-note of his life, the inspiration of his heart and hope, the open secret of that moral omnipotence of which Jean Paul speaks. That it was which in solitude made him conscious of glorious companionship, in weakness endowed him with resistless strength.

"Immanuel"—God with me—that is the inspiration of every prophet and true reformer.

"Immanuel"—God with us—it is the inspiration, the life, the power of every true and effective church. Such a church feels that it has God's truth in it, that it has some of God's work to do, that it has God's inspiring Spirit for its light, strength, guidance. In that conviction it lives, it is vital all through, it becomes a power. Its presence, its influence are recognized and felt all through the community. It knows not lethargy, indifference, nor cowardice. It is brave, it is aggressive; aggressive against all falsity, and all shams; aggressive for all truth and right. If a church believes that it has God's work to do and that other churches have it not, then it becomes fanatical, narrow, bigoted. If a church does not believe that it has God's work to do, then it becomes — NOTHING. Our church stands, or ought to stand, for a large, generous interpretation of Christianity, for living faith in Jesus and in his large, loving purposes, methods, and spirit; for sympathy, charity, humanity, and earnest beneficence.

The "Immanuel" conviction, the consciousness that God is with it, gives living and vitalizing energy to a church, fills its mind with great thoughts, its heart with great affections, rouses all its powers to a resoluteness of will, to a determinateness of purpose, that gives it full command of its resources, increases those resources mar-

velously, and makes difficulties vanish before its beneficent activity. God grant that this deep, living, Immanuel consciousness may be unfailing inspiration to the heart and hope of our church and of all churches, animating and impelling us all to lives and deeds accordant with the spirit and life of Him, the Son of man, whom perfect, filial obedience transfigured into the Son of God.

"Calm, on the listening ear of night,
Come heaven's melodious strains,
Where wild Judea stretches far
Her silver-mantled plains.

"Celestial choirs, from courts above,
Shed sacred glories there;
And angels, with their sparkling lyres,
Make music on the air.

"The answering hills of Palestine
Send back the glad reply;
And greet, from all their holy heights,
The day-spring from on high.

"O'er the blue depths of Galilee,
There comes a holier calm;
And Sharon waves, in solemn praise,
Her silent groves of palm.

"'Glory to God,' the sounding skies
Loud with their anthems ring;
"'Peace to the earth, good-will to men,
From heaven's eternal King!'

"Light on thy hills, Jerusalem!
The Saviour now is born;
And bright, on Bethlehem's joyous plains,
Breaks the first Christmas morn."

EDMUND H. SEARS.

FOREGLEAMS OF IMMORTALITY.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."—1 *John* iii, 2.

In one of his letters to Timothy the apostle Paul, out of the fullness of a loving heart, a great and consecrated mind, and a very marked and profound experience, exclaims, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen." Thus does the gifted and inspired writer characterize the infinite Sovereign, the ever-present Creator, the all-loving heavenly Father. Of this eternal, immortal King, this only wise God, St. John, as well as St. Paul, pronounces us children: "Now are we the sons of God." This close, intimate, filial relation of man to God is indicated or plainly stated in all parts of the Bible. It is presented emphatically and most impressively in the opening chapter of the book of Genesis: "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." And when Luke, the evangelist, gives the genealogy of our Saviour, he traces

it back from generation to generation up to the primeval man "Adam, who was the son of God." Matthew, writing originally for Hebrew Christians, traces the line to Abraham, "father of the faithful." Luke, writing for Christians generally, irrespective of Jewish and Gentile divisions, carries it beyond the great patriarch to the first man, humanity's earliest representative, whom it connects in tersest, simplest, and therefore most emphatic language, directly with the heavenly Father, "Adam, the son of God."

"Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" says the prophet Malachi, thus recognizing, as do all the writers in the sacred volume, man's filial relation to God—a relation confirmed by that divine Spirit, "Which beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ."

Can it be true that we are thus intimately connected with the infinite Spirit? Are we in very truth sons and daughters of God? And is He the King eternal, immortal? Then are we by our very nature participant of his immortality. The thought is grand beyond realization. We may say of it, as the psalmist says of the divine omnipresence, "It is high; we can not attain unto it." So vast, so measureless, is the distance between the divine almightiness and human feebleness, between the divine omniscience and man's ignorance, between the divine holiness and human sinfulness, that a connection so near, so tender, so sacred, between man and God seems incredible, impossible. Yet revelation asserts it. God's own Spirit whispers it to our spirits, and there are periods in our experience, those seasons of intensest interest in which deep cries unto deep, when

we feel, and are thrilled by the consciousness, that the God of heaven is indeed our Father.

United thus closely, thus vitally, to the eternal and immortal King, bearing his image, participant of the divine nature, is it strange that man should have glimpses of immortality? Shall the Father dwell in immortality? Shall immortality be the essential characteristic of His being, and shall no ray of the unfading light visit His child? A son of the immortal King, it would be surpassingly strange if man had no foregleams of immortality.

What is this great, enkindling thought of immortal life, which has come to the human mind ever since it was capable of thought and aspiration, in all ages and all lands; this thought which the ever-recurring presence of death can not destroy, which lives, though in a world whose myriad green graves would seem to proclaim it a cemetery for the dead rather than a home for the living? What is this inspiring, energizing thought but a foregleam of immortality? Whence came it? How did it find entrance to the human mind?

You will not, I know, give the poor, shallow answer, that it was formed by priests for the sake of deluding their fellow-beings and perpetuating their own ecclesiastical power. Men surely were men before they were priests, and the priests were but men; whence then had they the animating thought? And have the priests of the world been greater than its greatest men? Had Athens priests whose minds surpassed the minds of Socrates and Plato? Let us know who they were; give us their names, for men gifted with such transcendent intellectual powers surely bore no names that were born to die. From no Athenian priest or priesthood came to Socrates the sublime, com-

forting, invigorating thought of immortality. It came to him from no priesthood, but from his own manhood, and because that manhood was so broad and high, so genuine and profound, so consecrated to truth, and thus so faithful to its divine birth, his sense of immortality was clear and keen as the eagle's vision.

Tell me not that priests formed and developed and kept alive and powerful the thought of immortality. Nay, rather, in many parts of the world and in long ages, that thought of thoughts has lived in spite of priests and priesthoods. For what have they often done to, and what have they done with, this great heritage of humanity? They did not form it; they found it, and found it because man had it, and they undertook—some of them, not all—to make it an instrument for extending and perpetuating their sway. Hence their terrible perversion of it, their transformation of a beautiful spirit of light, heaven-born, into a horrifying spirit of darkness. Hence those fearful, mediæval, ecclesiastical schemings, imaginings, and portrayings, by which the perspective of the spiritual world was utterly destroyed, and the murky gloom of a hopeless hell was made to cover and shroud the larger part of God's universe. When one considers what dreadful representations have often been made of immortality, by men who claimed to be the teachers and leaders of mankind, he wonders almost that the thought of immortality was not rendered repulsive, if not destroyed altogether. It would have been destroyed if, by its origin and in its nature, it were not indestructible. From no priesthood did it come, but from manhood; and from manhood because it bore the image of divinity, because man is the child of the King immortal and eternal, and through that divine parentage receives the sense of immor-

tality—the instinct of immortality some call it. The name matters little. Call it what you will, sense or instinct, man has it, and has it because he is man, and the more of a man he is, the truer to great ideas, to lofty principles, and pure, generous affections, the keener the instinct, the more living and dominant the sense of immortality.

And again the question recurs, "Is it strange that to one endowed with this instinct, possessing this sense, occasional gleams of immortality should be granted?" Does it appear strange or unnatural to you or me that Jesus should have had glimpses of immortality? I can not answer for you, but to me it would have seemed very unnatural if he had not had them. I do not see how he could help having them, for in him manhood was perfect; the eye of the soul was undimmed by sin; his whole being, physical, mental, moral, spiritual, was in accord with the divine will and law. So perfect a son of man was he that he was a perfect Son of God, fully participant, therefore, of the divine nature, and always receptive of the divine Spirit, which was given to him ceaselessly and without measure. Were it possible, think you, that this Son of the ever-living God, of the King eternal, immortal, should be without the keenest sense of immortality? Is it conceivable that he could have lived without having glimpses of the immortal world? Oh no! To him the heavens must have been always open, and immortality as near and real as the always-felt presence of the immortal God, his loving Father. Not glimpses merely had he, I imagine, but a clear, continuous vision of the King in his beauty, and of the glorious land that to him was never far off.

To pure, true, earnest, loving Christ-like spirits I believe that glimpses of immortality in all ages have been given, and in all ages will be given. Sometimes, as we have

seen, they are given in thoughts so deep, so strong, so charged with the very essence of mental life as to be in themselves realizations of immortality. Sometimes they are given in convictions, assurances, into which the vitality and power of the whole nature, moral and intellectual, enter, and which make the world of immortality as real to consciousness as the life now lived.

Sometimes actual glimpses are given to the opened spiritual eye of persons and objects in the immortal state.

Never can I forget the impression made upon my mind, long years ago, by the illuminated face, the inspiring words, the outflowing of more than mortal joy in one to whom, just before she crossed the river, the enrapturing glimpses were granted. No excitable enthusiast was she, but a lady of profound and thoroughly-disciplined mind, a superior educator, of calm, meditative temperament, usually rather reticent and undemonstrative, an earnest truth-seeker, and a conscientious truth-lover. I saw her often during her illness, which was prolonged through many months and attended frequently with much pain. Her mind was untouched. It retained its calm clearness. She meditated as earnestly and continuously as ever, her thoughts growing deeper and grander all the while, her convictions daily becoming stronger and stronger until a few days before her departure, when faith was turned to sight, and she saw with emotions unutterable the world of life and immortality. An angel's face became hers, so luminous was it with the light "that was ne'er on earth or sea." Death even then was already swallowed up in victory, the corruptible put on incorruption and the mortal immortality. In lines written long afterward, and by one who knew her not, but who was of kindred spirit, and who was brought to

life's brink and then rallied again and lived on earth a little longer, we have in some respects almost an exact transcript of her inspiring experience:

"Entering the cloud with anguish,
Earthly friends stood close beside me—
Friends most faithful and heroic,
Thinking only of my trial,
And my bitter need of helping.
Very close they walked beside me
Till the way became too narrow,
Only meant for single treading!
With brief shudder, looking forward,
I let go the hands that held me,
And stepped out into the darkness!
Then, with Love Divine upholding,
I stood calm upon the margin
Of the darkly-flowing river;
Heard the dashing of the waters,
Looked across and caught some glimpses
Of that other shore eternal—
Glimpses faint, but they have shown me
Something of the life immortal!
Aye! and they have shown me also
Something of the life now present."

So it is that occasionally to earnest, conscientious, reverent, Christ-like souls, faithful sons and daughters of the heavenly Father, of the King eternal, immortal, invisible, glimpses are given of the beautiful world, and they see and appreciate the grandeur of the heritage of God, that glorious heritage referred to by the apostle in those words of wonderful and inexhaustible significance: "If children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." And can this heritage be ours? Its very grandeur seems almost to make it unattainable. You remember the just, profound, and helpful words of Dr. Channing: "How full, how

bright, are the evidences of this grand truth. How weak are the common arguments which skepticism arrays against it. To me there is but one objection against immortality, if objection it may be called, and this arises from the very greatness of the truth. My mind sometimes sinks under its weight, is lost in its immensity. I scarcely dare believe that such a good is placed within my reach. When I think of myself as existing through all future ages, as surviving this earth and that sky, as exempted from every imperfection and error of my present being, as clothed with an angel's glory, as comprehending with my intellect and embracing in my affections an extent of creation, compared with which the world is a point; when I think of myself as looking on the outward universe with an organ of vision that will reveal to me a beauty and harmony and order not now imagined, and as having an access to the minds of the wise and good, which will make them in a sense my own; when I think of myself as forming friendships with innumerable beings of rich and various intellect and the noblest virtue, as introduced to the society of heaven, as meeting there the great and excellent of whom I have read in history; as joined with the just made perfect in an ever-enlarging ministry of benevolence, as conversing with Jesus Christ with the familiarity of friendship, and especially as having an immediate intercourse with God, such as the closest intimacies of earth dimly shadow forth; when this thought of my future being comes to me, while I hope I also fear; the blessedness seems too great, the consciousness of present weakness and unworthiness is almost too strong for hope. But when in this frame of mind I look round on the creation, and see there the works of an omnipotent goodness, to which nothing is impossible, and from which every thing good may be hoped; when I see around me the

proofs of an infinite Father, who must desire the perpetual progress of his intellectual offspring; when I look next at the human mind, and see what powers a few years have unfolded, and discern in it the capacity of everlasting improvement; and especially when I look at Jesus, the conqueror of death, the heir of immortality, who has gone as the forerunner of mankind into the mansions of light and purity, I can and do admit the almost overpowering thought of the everlasting life, growth, felicity of the human soul."

Are we indeed sons and daughters of the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, participants of His immortality? Then let us live and act as becomes His children, and heirs of the glorious heritage. Let our minds be consecrated by the love of truth and expanded by noble thought. Let our souls ascend constantly in reverent aspiration. Let our hearts be made pure and clean by the divine Spirit, and kept tender and warm by Christ-like sympathy, charity, and beneficence. Then shall the thought of immortality daily become grander and more vivifying, the assurance of immortality shall constantly strengthen and deepen, and, as it shall please the ever-living and ever-present Father, glimpses shall now and then be granted of the world of life and beauty, to transfigure faith into sight and give the heart a foretaste of immortal peace and joy and blessedness. To them who live most faithfully here and now the spiritual, the eternal life, shall come brightest foregleams of immortality.

DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

"Behold the western evening light!
It melts in deepening gloom:
So calm the righteous sink away,
Descending to the tomb.

"The winds breathe low; the yellow leaf
Scarce whispers from the tree:
So gently flows the parting breath,
When good men cease to be.

"How beautiful, on all the hills,
The crimson light is shed!
'T is like the peace the dying gives
To mourners round his bed.

"How mildly, on the wandering cloud,
The sunset beam is cast!
So sweet the memory left behind,
When loved ones breathe their last.

"And lo! above the dews of night
The vesper star appears:
So faith lights up the mourner's heart,
Whose eyes are dim with tears.

"Night falls; but soon the morning light
Its glories shall restore:
And thus the eyes that sleep in death
Shall wake to close no more."

WILLIAM B. O. PEABODY.

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